

PLUCK AND LUCK

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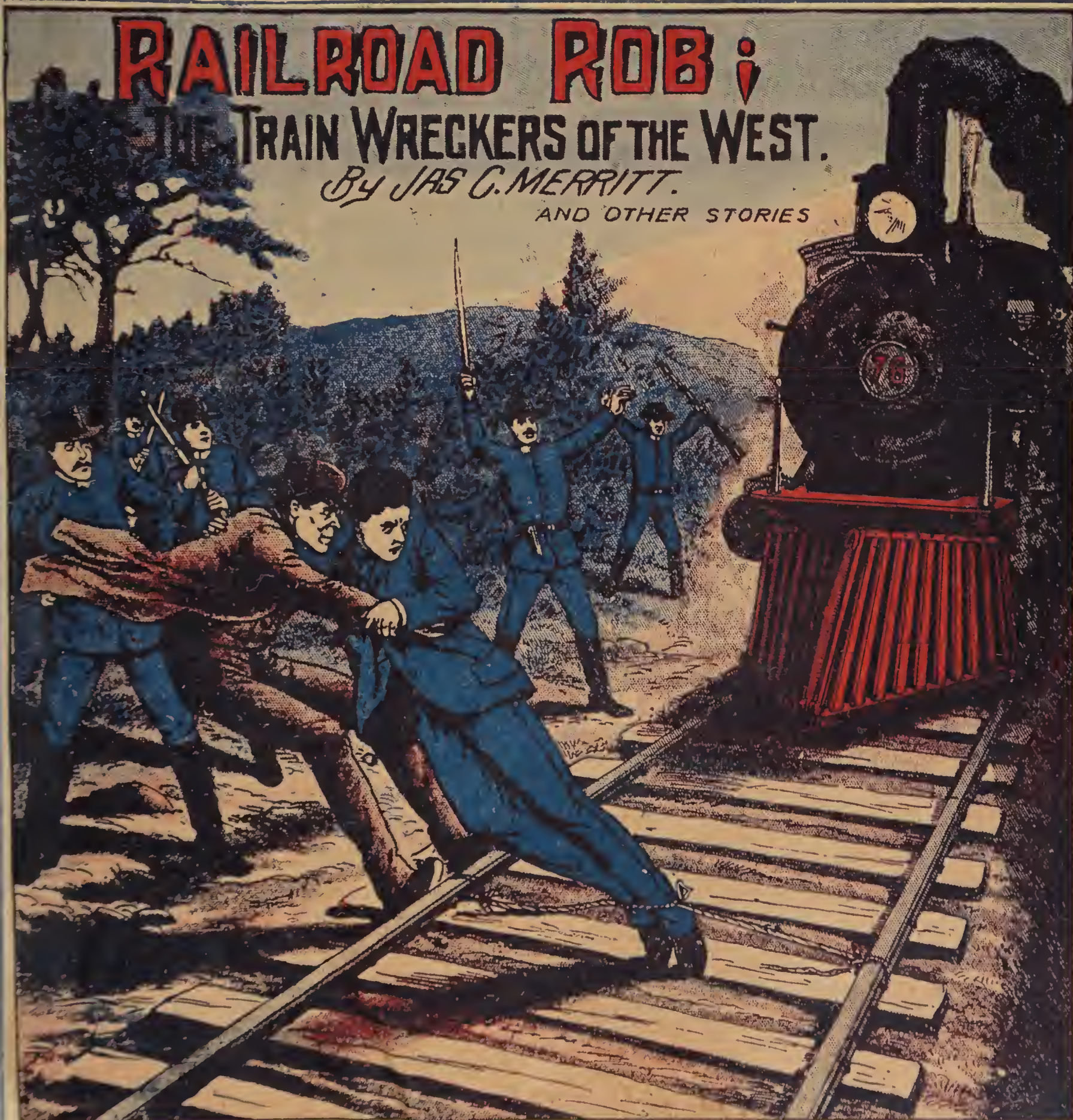
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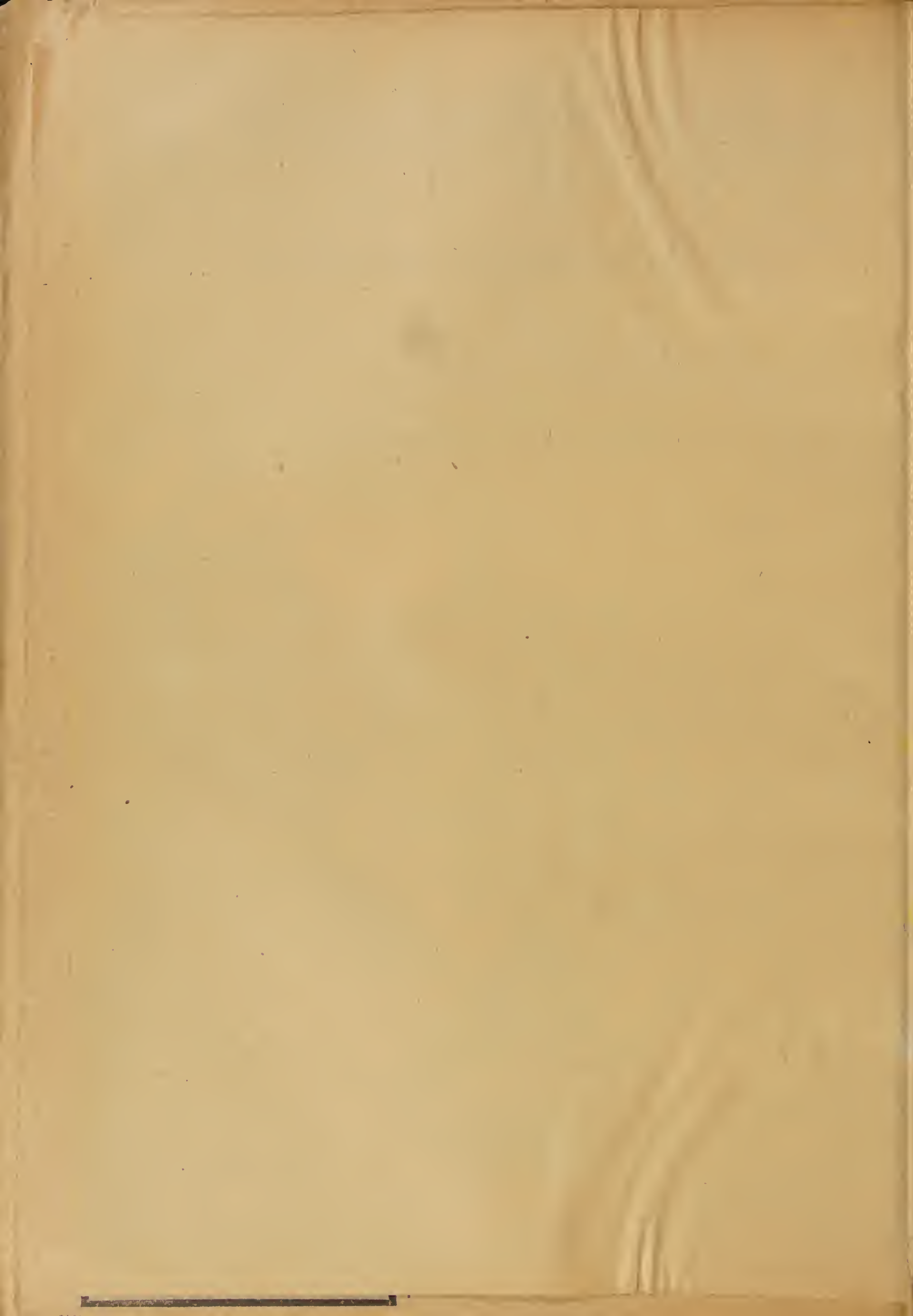
NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 8, 1920.

Price 7 Cents

RAILROAD ROB; THE TRAIN WRECKERS OF THE WEST. *By JAS G. MERRITT.* AND OTHER STORIES



Winding his arms around Rob, he braced his feet against the outside of the rail, and with the giant strength born of desperation tried to pull the helpless boy off the track. But the rawhide held fast.



PLUCK AND LUCK

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RAILROAD ROB

Or, THE TRAIN WRECKERS OF THE WEST

By JAS. C. MERRITT

CHAPTER I.—How Railroad Rob Got His Name.

"She's a regular old coffin on wheels, that's what she is," said Andrew Daley.

At large railroad stations where many trains are made up and dispatched, yardsmen are employed. With a switching engine—the engineer and fireman of which are under his orders—the yardsman collects together the cars suitable for dispatching on the train he is making up. At the time the first of the incidents I am about to relate occurred the engine used for switching at the Jersey City terminus of a railroad which shall be nameless, was the "Snorter," an old locomotive which had long since been pronounced unfit to send out on the line. It was the 14th day of August, in the year 1870. From early dawn the "Snorter" had been kept on the move, collecting the cars which were scattered wide over the depot yard, and "kicking" them on to the side tracks where the different trains were made up. About a quarter to twelve o'clock, as there was no work which it was necessary to do at once, the yardsman went to his dinner.

Andrew Daley, the fireman, had brought his dinner with him, and as he seated himself on the edge of a platform to eat it, he shook his fist at "Snorter," which was standing on a side track close at hand, and said:

"She's a regular old coffin on wheels, that's what she is."

"Don't abuse the old girl, Andy," said David Benson, the engineer, a good-looking, white-headed old man, who was standing by the engine, looking up the track, as if he expected some one.

"I'd like to know why I shouldn't abuse her."

"What good will it do?"

"I don't know as it will do any good, but I'd as well say a thing as to have it on my mind."

"It's a sin and a shame to make men run an engine that's sure to send them to kingdom-come sooner or later."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked Benson, interrupting the fireman, who was not by any means describing for the first time the dilapidated condition of the "Snorter."

"I'll quit her just as soon as I can get another job, that's what I'll do," replied Daley.

"And you won't, I guess."

"I hope I will, anyhow. If you'd say the word, we could quit her right away. The superintendent would be glad enough to have you take an engine on the road, and if you went, of course I'd go with you."

"No; I'm too old to stand the exposure and loss

of sleep on the road, and I want to be with my boy as much as possible."

"Rob is almost a man now."

"Yes, he is eighteen; he will quit school this year."

"He will make an A1 railroad man."

"I hope so."

"Bless you, he takes to it naturally, and what he don't know about an engine already is not worth knowing."

"Here he comes now; mind you don't say anything out of the way about the 'Snorter' while he is here. It will just make him feel uneasy, and do no good."

"Mum's the word, then, but you can bet your head he knows all about the 'Snorter,' as well as we do."

The next minute Robert Benson, or Railroad Rob, as he was usually called, a fine, manly youth with a shrewd but open countenance, and well-developed, compactly built figure which indicated both strength and activity, approached, and after exchanging salutations with the two men, placed a tin bucket on the side of the platform and said:

"Here's your dinner, father, all piping hot."

The elder Benson had not broken his fast since early in the morning, so he lost no time, but at once commenced to put the contents of the tin bucket where it would do the most good. While he was thus engaged Rob jumped on the "Snorter," examined the steam gauge, ascertained how much water there was in the boiler, put some fuel into the fire-box, oiled the engine wherever it needed it, and, in short, did everything that could be done under the circumstances, to put her in the best possible condition for immediate use. Soon as they finished their dinners, the two men lit their pipes, and Rob, after chatting with them a few minutes, seized the now empty tin pail, and left, saying:

"I must be off, or I will be late for school."

"It's about time for us to be moving, too," replied his father, "for here comes the yardsman now."

Rob had not gone more than three hundred yards, when he was startled by a dull, heavy explosion, which made the earth tremble. Wheeling around, he cast a quick, eager look toward where he left the engine. The "Snorter" had disappeared, and a dense cloud of steam hung over the spot where she had last stood. With his heart thumping against his ribs like a trip-hammer, Rob rushed back to the spot. A single glance showed what had happened. The boiler of the "Snorter" had burst, blowing the engine into

a thousand pieces. Daley and the yardsman were killed outright, but David Benson, though horribly mangled, was still alive. As Rob, in speechless agony, knelt by his father's side, the old man recognized him, and in a voice scarcely audible, gasped out:

"It's all over with me, my boy. Always do your duty, if you have to die at your post."

As the last word was uttered, the flickering lamp of life went out, and the heart of David Benson was stilled forever.

CHAPTER II.—All Aboard for the West.

Some years previous to the occurrences mentioned in the preceding chapter, Railroad Rob lost his mother, and, as he had neither brother nor sister, the death of his father left him alone in the world. Therefore, he was unfortunate. In fact, he did not know whether he had a blood relation on the face of the earth, though he had sometimes heard his father speak of having a younger brother out West, who was supposed to be engaged in mining; though nothing had been heard of him for a long time, and it was uncertain whether he was still alive. The day after David Benson was buried Mr. Blank, the general superintendent of the road, sent for Rob, and when he entered the office, said:

"I'm sorry for your loss, my boy. Your father was one of our best men, and I sent for you to offer you a place in the shop, or on the road—whichever you prefer."

"I'll never do a lick of work on your road," replied Bob curtly.

"Why?" asked the superintendent, who was astonished at Rob's answer.

"Because you think more about keeping down expenses than you do about the lives of the men who work for you."

"That is a very grave charge you are making," said Mr. Blank, flushing up.

"It's true, nevertheless," answered Rob stoutly. "If you had furnished the proper kind of switching engine for the yard, instead of that old worn-out rattle-trap, my father, Andy Daley, and the yardsman would have all been alive and well now."

"There—there, that will do!" ejaculated Mr. Blank, who was not a bad man naturally, though in his constant struggle to keep the expenses down, and the earnings up, so as to obtain a net revenue from the road, he was in a great measure careless about the lives and limbs of employees. "Some one has been poisoning your mind about me; however, I'll not get angry with you, but will help you if I can."

"I'm going away from here," replied Rob, "and I don't want any help."

"Well," persisted Mr. Blank, "I can furnish you with a pass to any point you wish to go to, even if it is to California, and will give you a letter of recommendation which may be of service to you."

"I dare say you mean kindly, Mr. Blank, but I will not accept any favor from you or your company, and feeling as I do, I cannot even thank you. Good-day!"

After paying his father's funeral expenses, Rob found that he had less than a hundred dollars

left, and with this he determined to go West, never doubting that he could find work, and having a vague hope that he might meet his uncle. His preparations were soon completed, and bidding his friends good-by, he went over to New York City, intending to buy an emigrant ticket at Castle Garden, where he knew that he was sure to get it at the lowest rate. While passing through the lower part of Greenwich street, where the houses are principally used for emigrant and sailors' boarding houses, his attention was attracted by a crowd of roughs, who were badgering a young Irishman, whose appearance unmistakably indicated that he had recently landed. As Rob was about passing the group, the roughs began to hustle the young Irishman, who in vain attempted to defend himself with a stick.

Rob's blood boiled at the sight, and without a moment's hesitation he sprang forward, striking right and left with all the nervous force of his muscular arms, sent two of the roughs rolling into the gutter, and placed himself by the side of the young Irishman, who, encouraged by seeing that he had some one to stand by him, moistened his hand, took a fresh grip of his stick, gave it a flourish around his head, and yelled out:

"Whoo! Come on now, ye bla'gards!"

And come on they did with a vengeance, the two roughs who were knocked down and four others, who had recoiled a few paces when Rob made his unexpected onset. The fight straightway became hot and furious. Fiercely assailed on all sides, and half stunned by the blows showered on them, Rob and the young fellow he had succored were nearly overpowered, when there was a cry off: "'Ware, coppers—look out—policemen!" and the roughs at once took to their heels. Motioning to the young Irishman to follow him, Rob forced his way through the crowd, hurried away, and thus escaped from being arrested. Rob and his companion, neither of whom were seriously injured, scarcely exchanged a word until they reached the Battery Park, when the latter, a droll-looking, round-faced young fellow, about the same age as Rob, said:

"And would ye moind tellin' yer name? for sure as I'm Larry Dolan, all the way from Listowell, County Kerry, I'll niver forget the good turn you done me to-day, and there's my hand on it."

Rob gave the desired information, shook the proffered hand, and asked:

"When did you land?"

"Sure, it was last ev'nin', an' I wor only out ov her castle in a garden for a mouthful of fresh air, whin thim bla'gards comminced ther throuble widout any rayson at all."

"Oh, they began to hustle you so that they could pick your pockets."

"Howly Bridget!" exclaimed Larry, bursting out laughing, "me money's all under ther bottom ov me fut in me sock, and there was niver a cint in me pockets, barrin' a tin-pinny bit that I'd already spint for a dhrink ov whisky."

"Are you going to stop in New York?" asked Rob, who could not help smiling at the quaint way in which Larry expressed himself.

"Sure, I'm going to me brother Mike out West. He sint for me."

"Ah, indeed! I'm going out West myself this morning."

"Hurroo! Thin we'll travil together if ye say
 "Certainly, with pleasure. How far are you
 ing?"
 "Till I come to the place."
 "What place?"
 "Where Mike is."
 "What is the name of the place?"
 "I don't know rightly, for it's the devil's own
 st Mike writes; you can look at his letther yer-
 self."

But when Larry searched his pockets for the
 letter, it was not to be found.
 "Sure, I must have lost it in ther foight," he
 said. "It wor in an old pocketbook."
 "Then some of the roughs got it," replied Rob.
 "Bejabers, it'll be no use to thim at all; but
 iver moind, I remember that Mike said he lived
 close to the railroad to Californy."
 "If that's all you know, I'm afraid you will
 ave a hard job finding your brother."
 "Go 'long wid you now; the counthry ain't so
 ig as that, anyhow."

When Rob explained the extent of the West,
 and mentioned the various railroads, Larry was
 unfounded.

"An' what will I be afther doin', thin?" he
 asked, at length.

"Well," replied Rob, "I'm going straight to
 Chicago, and you had better go with me; you
 may hear something of your brother, and in any
 event, we had as well stick together until some-
 thing turns up."

"I'll go wid ye to ther ind of ther worruld."
 Having stood by each other in a fight, and
 certain points of resemblance in their situations
 drawing the two boys toward each other, by the
 time they took a train for the West that evening
 they knew each other's history, and felt that
 henceforth they were friends.

CHAPTER III.—A Bloody Scene.

One month after leaving New York, Rob and
 Larry were in Cheyenne City, after having stop-
 ped for a few days in Chicago, Clinton, and
 Omaha. Larry had not yet heard anything of
 his brother Mike, nor had Rob succeeded in get-
 ting any work which he cared to do. At first con-
 stant walking made them quite sore, but that
 soon wore off, and for over a week the weather
 was so fine that they did not spend a cent for
 lodgings, but slept like tops under the sheds at
 stations, or on the grass near the track, wher-
 ever night overtook them. On the tenth day,
 however, the weather changed, and in the after-
 noon became so threatening that the boys eagerly
 looked for some place of shelter. But not a
 house was in sight, and on either hand, extending
 as far as the eye could reach, was an almost tree-
 less plain. So the boys hurried onward toward
 some hills, which had been in sight since early
 in the morning. But owing to the extreme clear-
 ness of the atmosphere on the plains, objects are
 seen very plainly at immense distances, and the
 boys did not reach the foot of the hills until
 nearly sundown. Dark, murky clouds were rac-
 ing athwart the sky, and deep-toned thunder mut-
 tered overhead. There was no sign of a human
 habitation, and the boys anxiously scanned the
 hillside, in hope of discovering some overhanging

rock under which they could shelter themselves
 from the impending tempest.

Their money had about given out and they were
 compelled to tramp from one city to another.
 They were on a country road now, when sud-
 denly the sharp, ringing report of a shot came
 borne upon the wind, instantly followed by an-
 other and another, accompanied by the most pierc-
 ing screams. Again and again those fearful
 cries rang through the air, curdling the blood in
 the veins of Rob and Larry, and causing their
 hair to stand on end.

"It is a woman!" exclaimed Rob, and as if his
 words broke the spell that bound them, the two
 boys darted off toward the spot from whence the
 sounds proceeded.

Speeding along for about a hundred yards, the
 boys came to the entrance of a narrow valley,
 which lay between the hills on the left of the
 railroad. The spectacle that met their eyes was
 so singular and terrible that its horror was suf-
 ficient to have struck a chill to the hearts of
 those more used than Rob and Larry had been to
 scenes of violence. Upon the ground in front of
 a small house lay two men and a fair-haired boy
 of about sixteen, who had evidently been recently
 slain, the former by wounds in the body, the
 latter by a bullet which had shattered his head
 almost to atoms. A little way to one side of the
 bodies a beautiful girl was struggling to escape
 from the rough grasp of a dark-browed ruffian,
 and uttering the same wild shrieks which caught
 the attention of the boys while at a distance.

It must not be supposed that the boys noticed
 all that I have mentioned in the fearful excite-
 ment of the first moment. Their first glance was
 riveted on three men engaged in mortal conflict.
 They were all armed with bowie knives, and one
 of them—the eldest, a gray-haired but vigorous
 man, with his back against the side of the house
 —was defending himself against the other two.
 The struggle, however, was too unequal to last
 long, and even as Rob and Larry rushed forward
 to succor the gray-haired man, he received a
 wound which caused him to fall senseless to the
 earth. Warned by the shout of the man holding
 the girl, the two ruffians, who were about to com-
 plete their bloody work, wheeled around, and, on
 seeing Rob and Larry—who were now only a
 few yards distant—rushed upon them with up-
 lifted knives. Bang! went Rob's old pistol, and
 one of the villains fell dead with a bullet through
 his heart. Crack! Larry's stick came down upon
 the head of the other, and he rolled on the ground
 senseless as a log. On seeing the fate of his
 comrades, the ruffian with the girl endeavored to
 reach a horse—five of which, all saddled and
 bridled, were unconcernedly grazing near at hand
 and carry her off.

But the boys were too nimble for him, and find-
 ing that he was about to be overtaken, the vil-
 lain released the girl, leaped on the first horse he
 came to, dashed away, and soon disappeared.
 Without appearing to pay any attention to Rob
 and Larry, the girl, who was just budding into
 womanhood, flew to the dead body, twined her
 arms around him, and pressed kiss after kiss
 upon his pallid lips; then tottering toward the
 house, she knelt by the side of the gray-haired
 man, gazed a moment in his face, and seeing no
 indication of life, uttered a heartbroken moan,

and swooned away upon his body. Stepping to the door of the house, which was not more than two yards distant, Rob knocked and called out. There was no response, so he entered the door, which stood open, and quickly passed through the large front room and two small ones to the rear—which constituted the entire dwelling—but found no living thing, not even a cat, in the place.

Rob and Larry then carried the girl, whose hair was stained and dress bedabbled with blood, into the house; also the gray-haired man, who was found to be still breathing. Placing the insensible man and girl upon two low couches in the front room, the boys first bound up the wounds of the former, and then tried to resuscitate them. After persevering for some time without success, Rob and Larry, apprehending that their well-meant but clumsy efforts might be productive of more harm than good, desisted. It was now nearly dark, and the sigh of the wind and the muttering of the gathering tempest, were the only sounds that were heard.

Bob now determined to get assistance from somewhere. Leaving Larry, he mounted one of the dead robbers' horses and set out along the railroad track. Coming to a lot of tents set up beside a railroad station, Rob saw he had to deal with government troops. Approaching, he asked the guard to take him to the commandant. To him Rob told his story, and the officer sent a detachment back with Bob to the scene of the tragedy. They brought with them a doctor, who attended to the gray-haired man's injuries. After a short time he came to consciousness, and told the boys that the girl, Lucy, was his daughter. The next day Bob, Lucy, Mr. Howard and Larry set out for Fort Steele on board of a train. Before leaving Lucy entrusted a box which she took from a secret compartment in the floor to Bob's care. So when they boarded the train Rob had the box in his possession.

CHAPTER IV.—The Train-Wreckers' Den.

The great Transcontinental Railroad, along the line of which the principal portion of the incidents related in this narrative occurred, is owned by two companies, namely, the Central Pacific Railroad Company and the Union Pacific Railroad Company. The Central Pacific Company broke ground at Sacramento on the 8th of January, 1863, but the Union Pacific Company did not do so until the 5th of November, 1865. The two roads were completed and connected at Promontory Station, May 10, 1869. The entire length of the road from San Francisco to Omaha is 1,913 miles, of which the Union Pacific Company constructed 1,085 miles, but afterward sold to the Central Pacific Railroad Company that portion of the road—53 miles in length—between Promontory and Ogden.

Thus it will be seen that the Union Pacific Railroad Company works the 1,032 miles of road lying between Ogden and Omaha, and the Central Pacific Railroad Company the 881 miles of road lying between Ogden and San Francisco. The Central Pacific Company did not allow any "grogeries" or "gin mills" in their camps while they were constructing their line. By this wise precaution, debauchery and bloodshed were avoid-

ed, and the work was satisfactorily done. The Union Pacific Company could not or did not follow a like course, and the result was that every town which, for the time being, was the end of the line, was a perfect hell; violence and murder kept pace with the line, and there are few towns between Ogden and Omaha which do not contain the remains of more than one desperado. A full account of the reign of terror which forms a part of the earlier history of all the towns along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad would fill a large volume, but to this subject I do not propose to allude any further than is necessary to explain the origin of a gang of outlaws under the leadership of a villain called Red Dick. It was his band which had committed the outrages at the Howard cabin.

At the different places along the route, many of which sprang into existence and then disappeared as the road advanced, the lowest villains unhung congregated from all parts. Day and night at the gambling table and the low dance house they held high carnival, and every successive day saw some poor wretch murdered in rage or spite. Where these people came from originally, and where they were to go when the road was finished, and their occupation was over, were puzzles too intricate to be solved. The reign of the roughs, though terrible while it lasted, was of brief duration. As the road advanced, law-abiding citizens organized themselves into vigilance committees, which drove such of the desperadoes as were not hung or shot steadily westward, and when the road was completed the villains found it to their advantage to skip. Some returned to the cities from whose slums they had emerged, while others, more desperate or daring, joined themselves together in gangs for mutual protection, and plundered openly, or by stealth, as opportunity offered. Of the latter class were the band of robbers and train-wreckers commanded by Red Dick.

Enraged at the defeat he had met with at the house by the railroad, and for reasons which will speedily appear, Red Dick was in no humor for talking. Consequently there was very little conversation between him and his companions, for they knew the savage temper of their chief too well to irritate him by talking, when he evinced a disposition to be silent. It would be impossible to find any situation more terrible and extraordinary than the spot which the train-wreckers had selected for their abiding place. It was a small valley of an irregular oval shape, some five hundred yards long by three hundred in width, being surrounded on all sides by tremendous precipices, it seemed as if it were placed at the bottom of a huge well. The descent was over boulders and jagged rocks, which formed a rude and steep natural flight of steps that followed the windings of a mountain torrent, which rushed, roaring and foaming, down into the valley.

This torrent ran across the valley, and then disappeared in a dark cavernous opening in the rocks. At the base of the overhanging cliffs on the right-hand side of the torrent were a sufficient number of rough cabins to accommodate the whole band of train-wreckers. But for two things the spot would have been an unexceptionable robbers' retreat—horses could not be carried into the valley, and an assailing party, by taking a posi-

tion that commanded the top of the natural stairway, would leave the occupants of the place no alternative except to be starved out, or fight at a great disadvantage. Notwithstanding these defects, the place from the time it was first occupied had proved to be a safe asylum for the robbers, and no untoward circumstances had caused them to realize the fact that they had deliberately placed themselves in a position that might, under certain circumstances, prove to be the worst kind of a trap.

The security of the place, however, was almost entirely owing to the difficulty of finding it, and that could scarcely be overrated, as the approach to it for some miles was over bare rocks, where an army might have marched without leaving a trail. The robbers themselves omitted no precaution to prevent the spot from being discovered, and none of the prisoners who, from time to time, were carried into the valley to act as servants, and for other purposes, were ever allowed to leave it alive. It might truly have been said of the hapless captives who were taken to the accursed spot, that on entering it they left hope behind, for upon the slightest provocation, and frequently from mere caprice, they were shot, stabbed or thrown into the torrent to be hurled to swift destruction in the hideous abyss which swallowed it up. On approaching the entrance to the valley, Red Dick imitated the howl of a prairie wolf, and on being answered by the hooting of an owl, continued to advance. A minute or so afterward he and his companions were confronted by a man with a gun in his hand, who stepped from a place of concealment among the rocks and said:

"So you didn't go under, captain?"

"No," replied Red Dick. "Have the men got back from the bridge?"

"Some of them."

"How did things work?"

"Bad enough," and then lowering his voice to a whisper, the man continued: "you had better keep your eyes skinned, for the boys are ugly, and no mistake."

"Maybe some of them will be uglier than they are now before they are many hours older."

And with that Red Dick satisfied himself that his knife and pistols were loose in their scabbards and followed by his two comrades, descended into the valley.

CHAPTER V.—A Prospect of Fight.

When Red Dick arrived in the valley, he found some forty or fifty of the band of train-wreckers reclining on the ground, or standing around a large fire, listening to a stout, ferocious-looking fellow, armed to the teeth, who was perched upon a stone, and spoke with an assumption of authority. The listeners were so much absorbed in what was being said that they did not notice the approach of their leader, but the speaker did, and exclaiming in a suppressed voice: "There he is now!" stopped his harangue so abruptly that Red Dick felt certain that he had been the subject of the oration. There was a dogged, sullen look on the faces of most of the gang, and the muttered exclamations and fierce glances with which they greeted Red Dick boded him no good,

and could scarcely have escaped the notice of the dullest. But Red Dick was a wily, as well as a desperate, villain; affecting not to notice the manner in which he was received, he strode into the midst of the gang, and in a voice which, if it was not cheery, had no tremor in it, said:

"Well, boys, how did you come out at the bridge?"

"There was blazes to pay, and no pitch hot," growled the late orator, who, owing to an obliquity in his vision, was known by the pseudonym of Cross-eyed Bill.

"What happened?"

"Well, the train was smashed up just about as we wanted it, except that the express car fell through the break in the bridge, so it was hard to get at."

"Well?"

"While we were trying to get at the express safe, and going through the passengers and their baggage, a company of soldiers slipped up and let drive among us."

"Was there much of a fight?"

"Not on our side; they charged us, and those that did not light out mighty quick were nabbed, or died with their boots on."

"How many men did you lose?"

"There are twenty-four missing, not counting those that went with you and after you."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"You ought to have thought of that before you brought it about."

"Me! How did I bring it about?"

"That you know best yourself."

"I'll be hanged if I do."

"Well, I'd just like to ask you a question or two."

"Blaze away, then," replied Red Dick, who was furious with rage, but restrained himself with a powerful effort.

"You ordered that the bridge should be cut, did you not?"

"Yes."

"And said that you would be there before the time for the train?"

"Yes."

"You did not show yourself?"

"Well, a man who neglects the interests of the band is not fit to be its captain."

There was an undisguised murmur of assent to this, and Red Dick saw that his position—nay, his life itself—might be lost if he did not do something to turn the tide which was setting against him.

"You seem to doubt my ability as a leader," said Red Dick.

"I do," replied Cross-eyed Bill.

"Then if you are not a coward, as well as a sneaking slanderer, you will give me satisfaction, for you have offered me an insult, which nothing but your heart's blood can wipe out."

There was perhaps not a man present who did not expect there would instantly be a rough-and-tumble fight, which would be fought to the bitter end, and the crowd hastily drew back to avoid being shot or cut by accident, and left Red Dick and Cross-eyed Bill confronting each other. For an instant or two the men stood glaring at each other, but Cross-eyed Bill neither spoke nor made any motion to accept the defiance hurled in his face, and the robbers began to murmur with as-

tonishment, for no one believed him to be a coward.

CHAPTER VI.—A Duel by Torchlight.

The deadly skill of Red Dick with all kinds of weapons, and his unflinching bravery, made him an adversary that any man might well hesitate to encounter in single combat, and, besides, the band seemed to be in a humor to deal with him severely, under the impression that he was indirectly, at least, the cause of their late disaster. Therefore, Cross-eyed Bill, though by no means a coward, was desirous of avoiding a personal difficulty, especially as he expected to become commander of the band, if Red Dick was put out of the way.

"Well," said Red Dick impatiently, after a few moments had passed, "will you fight or show the white feather?"

"I don't want any fuss with you," replied Cross-eyed Bill, "but when the band is through with you I am at your service, if you insist upon a fight."

"You can't sneak out of the matter that way; the band can investigate my conduct if it chooses to do so, of course; but, in the meantime, there is no reason why we should not settle our little affair; no one will object, I am sure."

And he was right; no one did object, for nothing—not even the prospect of plunder—excited a livelier interest among the lawless band than a combat between two well-matched men. Cross-eyed Bill, in his eagerness to get rid of Red Dick, had gone further than he intended, but what had passed could not be recalled, and finding that he was in a position where he would have to fight or backout, he determined to do the former. Having concluded to fight, Red Dick and Cross-eyed Bill each selected a second, and the terms were quickly agreed upon. These were savage enough for the most bloodthirsty. Colt's revolvers, dragoon size, were the weapons, and all of the chambers were to be loaded, the distance twenty paces, and after the word was given the men to be at liberty to advance or retain their positions, as they thought best. The ground measured, Red Dick and Cross-eyed Bill took their positions, and the pistols, already cocked, were handed to them.

On either side of the space between the two combatants, the other robbers ranged themselves in two lines, looking fierce and eager in the flare of torches which had been hastily made, for in the valley it was yet quite dark, though the crests of the surrounding hills indicated that the dawn was breaking. There was a slight pause after the men took their positions, and the gang scanned them curiously, but neither of them flinched, though it was a foregone conclusion that one or both of them would be killed, for they were good shots, and each of them had the right to fire six times; bets, however, were freely offered and taken among the robbers that neither of the men would fire more than once.

"Gentlemen, are you ready?" asked one of the seconds.

"Ready!" was the response from each of the men.

"Fire!"

The reports of the two pistols were almost simultaneous. Red Dick's hat, pierced by a bullet, not an inch above his head, flew into the air, but he stood firm. Cross-eyed Bill, however, was not so fortunate; he leaped spasmodically into the air and fell at full length on his back—dead! The heavy pistol ball had passed directly through his heart, and he never knew what hurt him, his death was so instantaneous.

"Anybody else got a private grudge against me that they would like to settle?" asked Red Dick, cool as a cucumber.

No one answered, and he continued:

"I never have gone back on you, men, and I never will."

"That's so," assented several of the robbers whose confidence in Red Dick had been only temporarily shaken by the machinations of Cross-eyed Bill.

"I will satisfy you all that I am not to blame for not being at the bridge."

"We will take your word for it," exclaimed a number of the men.

"I thank you for your confidence; however, I will explain the matter, anyway. But now we need a little rest. Let two of the men who have remained in the valley during the night go on a scouting expedition toward the bridge, for those infernal soldiers may try to beat up our quarters."

Red Dick then retired to his cabin, and after barring his door, took a stiff drink of whisky and threw himself, dressed as he was, on a bunk.

CHAPTER VII.—An Infernal Machine.

Soon as the train started, Rob went to Lucy Howard, and calling her out of the stateroom so as not to disturb her father, asked what caused the strange sounds in the box which was placed in his charge.

"Papa would be angry with me if I told you," she replied.

"Is there anything in the box that is dangerous?" asked Rob.

"Not to you."

"Why not to me, as well as to any one else?"

"I must not tell."

"I don't understand how the contents of the box can be harmless to me and dangerous to others."

"I know you cannot understand it, but please don't ask me to explain, for I really ought not to have said a word about the matter."

And with this Rob had to be contented, for he saw that it would only distress Lucy without shaking her resolution, if he endeavored to persuade her to be more explicit. Rob, therefore, left Lucy with her father, and returned to Larry, who was very much astonished when the above conversation was reported to him.

"Arrah now," he said, "that's square, entirely; but if ther box won't harm you, it will not be afther hurtin' yer friends ayther."

"I hope not," replied Rob.

"You may depend on it, though, for that matter, I'd be wid ye, anyhow, if ye nade help in movin' or guardin' it."

"I know you would, old fellow, but we won't be

bothered with it long, for it is only some fifty-six or seven miles to Fort Steele."

Shortly the cars reached the broken bridge, the scene of the train wreck ordered by Red Dick. The passengers and their baggage were transferred to a train on the other side of the river. A few minutes afterward the cars started, and in about two hours were at Fort Steele. Mr. Howard, who had stood the trip much better than could have been expected, was at once carried to the surgeon's quarters, and Rob and Larry were given a room in the same house. Fort Steele, as its name implies, is a military post. The fort, which occupies a good position between the railroad and the north fork of the Platte river, was established in 1868. At the time of which I write it was garrisoned by three companies of the 13th infantry, and one company of the 2d cavalry, and the commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A. Morrow, 13th infantry.

Several of the officers had their wives with them, and so Lucy Howard had what she much needed—the companionship and sympathy of her own sex. Rob and Larry were treated with the greatest kindness by both officers and men, and they had nothing to complain of, except having to relate their adventures with the robbers about a dozen times a day. The day after they arrived at the fort Mr. Howard requested Rob to deliver the iron box to Lucy, and thanked him for taking care of it, but did not say a word about its contents. After supper that same evening Rob and Larry walked down to the railroad depot, which is a few hundred yards from the fort. Just as they were turning the corner of the depot building Rob suddenly seized Larry by the arm and drew him back, at the same time saying in a whisper:

"Don't make any noise."

"An' what's ther matter?" asked Larry, in the same tone of voice.

"There is some rascality on foot."

"Phat d'ye mane?"

"I saw a man crawling on his hands and knees toward the back of the depot."

"Thin it's mischief he's afther."

"Let us watch him," and thereupon the two boys crouched down and peeped around the corner of the building. The moon was only in its first quarter, but the night was very clear, and Rob and Larry plainly saw a man creeping on his all-fours toward the depot, from which he was distant about fifty yards. He moved very slowly and cautiously, occasionally stopping as if to listen, and once he laid flat on the ground, motionless as a log, for about two minutes.

"We will see what he is up to," whispered Rob, "and then grab him."

On reaching the back part of the depot the man, kneeling on one knee, took from a pouch which he wore a whitish object of an oval shape and somewhat larger than a man's clenched fist, and was about to put it under the house when Rob, who thought that the building was in danger of being set on fire, sprang up and dashed forward, shouting:

"Now for him, Larry!"

The man however, was on the alert; in an instant he was on his feet, and with the whitish-looking object in his hand, darted away like a

deer. Rob and Larry gave chase; they were both good runners, but soon found that they had met with more than their match, for the man steadily increased his lead.

"Stop!" cried Rob, "or I'll shoot you!"

No attention was paid to the order, and Rob drew a pistol and fired in the air, for he did not like the idea of shooting at a man upon the mere suspicion that he was doing something wrong, however strong that suspicion might be. Rob had some faint hope that by firing the pistol he might scare the man and make him stop, but was entirely unprepared for what happened. Whether the man was startled by the report of the pistol so that he made a misstep and fell, or his foot came in contact with something which tripped him up, will never be known. But when the sharp crack of the pistol rang out upon the air, he fell headlong, and the moment he struck the ground there was a vivid, blinding flash of fire, and a sharp, tremendous report like a clap of thunder.

It was so awful that both the boys stood as if rooted to the ground, and shivered with terror. Over the spot where the man fell and the explosion occurred there was a small cloud of white smoke, which seemed to remain motionless for a few seconds, then drifted away upon the night breeze, trailing along the grass like a ghostly shroud. The grass was only a few inches high, and the boys were not more than forty yards from where the man fell, but they could not see anything of him. Filled with wonder and awe, the two boys approached the place where they had last seen the man. They found the grass for several yards around blackened and blasted, a considerable hole scooped in the ground, and near it a nameless horror of blood and mutilation, from which they instinctively recoiled. The man had evidently been blown to pieces by some kind of an infernal machine, which was caused to explode by the shock when he fell.

The head, arms, and the upper part of the trunk of the unfortunate wretch had been torn completely away, and nothing remained but the lower part of the body and the legs, and from this miserable remnant a considerable portion of the flesh had been burned by the instantaneous flash of the explosive. Rob and Larry had looked at this frightful spectacle but a few seconds before a squad of cavalry, which had been sent from the fort to ascertain what caused the explosion, dashed up to the spot. The soldiers knew Rob and Larry, and after hearing their account of what had happened, four of them dismounted, and laying what was left of the dead man across two carbines, bore their ghastly burden to the fort.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rob Sticks to His Post, and Larry Sticks to Him.

When Rob and Larry got back to the fort they accompanied the cavalymen with the poor fragment of humanity to the quarters of Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow, the commanding officer, where they found collected nearly all of the officers, including Surgeon Blair. For the second time Rob had to tell what had happened, and his story was listened to with breathless attention, and when

he concluded Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow shook his head and remarked:

"I'm afraid we will have trouble."

"From what source do you apprehend trouble?" asked Surgeon Blair.

"From the Indians."

"Are they on the warpath?"

"Some white renegades have been tampering with the tribes about the head waters of the North Platte, and I am inclined to think that the attempt to destroy the depot indicates that the red devils have dug up the hatchet."

The next day Mr. Fillmore, the division superintendent, arrived.

"I shall only stop here about three hours," he said to Rob and Larry, who were at the depot to meet him, "then I shall start to San Francisco, and I want you boys to be ready to go with me."

The boys were delighted with the idea of going to California, but it must be confessed that Rob felt rather blue about leaving Lucy Howard. But of course neither of the boys were at all disposed to disregard a wish of Mr. Fillmore's, and they fully appreciated his kindness in giving them a pleasant excursion before they commenced work. So they bade their friends good-by, and taking the next train with Mr. Fillmore, were whirled off toward the Pacific coast. During nearly the whole of the trip Rob and Larry made it a point to ride on the locomotive, or rather locomotives, for as a general thing they were changed at least once in every twelve hours; had it been otherwise, the engineers would have been changed, for until a man is perfectly familiar with his engine he cannot run it to the best advantage. Rob and Larry could not have ridden on the locomotives without the permission of the division superintendents, but that was readily obtained for them by Mr. Fillmore.

The trip was very pleasant from the outset, and nothing of an extraordinary nature occurred until the boys were within a short distance of Sacramento. It was after sundown, and the boys were as usual on the locomotive, when the engineer said to Rob:

"It is a pity that it is dark, so that you can't take a good look at the long bridge that we will pass directly."

"What bridge is it?" asked Rob.

"The bridge across American River, three miles this side of Sacramento; it is five thousand, seven hundred and fifty feet long."

"I had no idea that the river was so wide."

"It is not the usual breadth of the river which requires so long a bridge, but the distance to which it overflows its banks during the floods."

A few minutes afterward the engineer said:

"There seems to be a light ahead."

Rob looked ahead and saw a weird light, a halo of unearthly appearance. It shimmered and waved to and fro like a will-o'-the-wisp. It was a most ghastly white mist—a ghastly warning.

"Do you think it is on the track?" asked Rob.

"I can't tell yet," replied the engineer, and almost immediately afterward exclaimed: "Great God! the bridge is on fire!" and instantly whistled "down brakes," cut off the steam, and reversed the engine.

But he might as well have tried to stop a whirlwind as the locomotive in the distance between it and the bridge.

"Look out for yourselves!" he yelled. "I'm going to jump for it!" and the next instant both engineer and fireman sprang off the engine.

"Jump!" shouted Larry, leaping forward from the tender to where Rob was standing on the footboard of the engine.

"No," replied Rob; "I'll stick to her if I die at my post; but do you jump."

"Sure, I'll not lave ye. Can't I help ye?"

"Not now. Get back on the tender; you are just in my way."

Nothing more was said. There was no time to say anything, for the bridge was not more than three hundred yards distant, and the fire which had been started by an incendiary at the bottom of the wooded beams which supported the bridge was now flaming and roaring far above its top. Believing that, as the train could not be stopped, the faster they went the better, Rob whistled to have the brakes taken off, and threw the throttle valve wide open and gave the engine all the steam there was. It was a steep down-grade, and the train shot ahead as if it had been fired out of a cannon. The next instant the locomotive dashed on to the swaying, trembling bridge, and plunged straight onward into the roaring sea of fire. Larry cowered down among the coal in the tender, but Rob stood erect, as an engineer should stand, with his hand on the throttle valve and his eyes ahead.

CHAPTER IX.—Through the Flames.

The conductor and several of the passengers who looked out of the windows of the cars when they heard the signal to put on the brakes saw the engineer and fireman jump off the engine, and they uttered cries of dismay. Almost in an instant, for bad news travels fast, it was known through the train that there was danger ahead, and that the engineer and fireman had deserted their posts, and this produced a general impression that the peril was not only great, but unavoidable. Consequently almost every one was frightened nearly to death; women screamed or fainted, and strong men turned pale and trembled, and well they might, for there was good cause to suppose that they were being hurried at lightning speed to certain destruction.

Some of the passengers remained motionless in their seats, and with sinking hearts awaited their fate, but others rushed to the doors of the cars, intending to jump off; the speed of the train, however, was so frightful that they shrank back, dismayed, and it was well they did, for both the engineer and fireman were fatally injured when they jumped off. When the signal to let go the brakes was heard, every one was astonished except Mr. Fillmore, who at once jumped to a right conclusion, and cried out:

"Thank God, there is hope yet! Railroad Rob is on the engine!"

Blinded by the glare of the flames which curled and roared around him, scorched and blackened by the fierce heat, and half suffocated by the dense smoke, Rob stood at his post steadily as if he had been made of iron, instead of flesh and blood. He felt the bridge sway and tremble beneath him, as if it were struck by a hurricane, and heard an ominous cracking noise, as if the

partly consumed timbers were breaking beneath the weight of the swift rushing train. Terrible as the danger was, it passed like a flash, for such was the speed at which the cars were moving that almost before Rob could realize it, the train was thundering along on the further bank of the river. The whole thing transpired in a moment; but a dozen such moments were worse than death, and would furnish terror and agony enough for a lifetime.

Soon after the bridge was passed Rob whistled to have the brakes put on, and shut off the steam, for the dull, oppressive roar as he shot through rock cuttings, the rocking and straining of the engine, and the almost inconceivable velocity at which the driving wheels revolved, indicated that the speed of the train was something awful. In fact, such was the momentum of the train that Rob did not feel that the speed was sufficiently abated to give him complete control of the engine until he was fully a mile and a half from the river. Then, and not till then, Rob and Larry, who for some minutes past had been tugging away at the tender brakes, clasped hands; but their hearts were too full for words. Knowing the importance of running on time; Rob did not think it proper to stop the engine at once, but kept on until he reached the station at Sacramento, which was only about a mile and a half farther.

Soon as the cars stopped, the passengers poured out of the train and swarmed around the engine thick as bees, shouting and hurrahing for Rob like madmen. Nor were they satisfied with this, for some of the most enthusiastic pulled him off the engine, and in spite of all he could do, carried him around on their shoulders. Neither was Larry overlooked or neglected by the grateful crowd; but they made almost as much fuss over him as they did over Rob, for, though he had not done as much, he stuck to the engine and took equal risks.

CHAPTER X.—The Penalty of Being Famous.

The morning after their arrival at Sacramento Mr. Fillmore handed Rob and Larry each a roll of greenbacks, containing several hundred dollars, and said:

"Here is some pocket money for you; there is plenty more where it came from, and I want you to use it freely."

"We are very much obliged to you," replied Rob, "but we would rather not accept any money until we earn it."

"You have already earned a great deal more than that."

Rob and Larry, however, insisted that they did not wish to receive money for what they had done, but Mr. Fillmore would not listen to them, and ended the conversation by saying:

"I intend that you shall enjoy yourself during this trip, and you will make me angry if you do not let me be your banker."

After that, of course, Rob and Larry had to drop the subject. This matter being settled, Mr. Fillmore told the boys that he had some business to attend to, and that they must amuse themselves as they thought best.

"I say, Larry," remarked Bob, when they were

left by themselves, "as we have to take the money, we had better buy some clothes, for we begin to look a little shabby."

A clothing store was soon found, and after the boys had rigged themselves up in first-class style they sallied forth to take a look at the city, and saw plenty of things that interested them, for Sacramento is one of the handsomest cities west of the Rocky Mountains. On returning to the hotel to dinner, they were informed by Mr. Fillmore that he was going to the theater with some friends and wanted them to accompany him. Rob and Larry had been going about all day and would rather have gone to bed, but they did not wish to appear rude, and accepted the invitation.

Soon after dark Mr. Fillmore carried them to the principal parlor of the hotel, which they found filled with ladies and gentlemen in evening dress, who arose to their feet, and moving to either side, left the boys standing in an open space. Neither Rob nor Larry had ever been in such a fashionable assemblage before, and very naturally felt rather bashful. Nor was what occurred immediately after their entrance into the parlor at all calculated to restore their self-possession. For one of the leading lawyers of Sacramento stepped in front of them, and after making a very flowery speech, in which he praised the two boys up to the skies, presented each of them with a magnificent gold watch and chain. Rob and Larry blushed up to the tips of their ears, but the former managed to utter some few words of acknowledgment, though he scarcely knew what he said. Engraved on the case of Robert's watch were the following words:

"Presented to Railroad Rob, as a testimonial of gratitude, by those who were on the train which dashed across the burning bridge over the American River."

The inscription on Larry's watch was exactly the same, except that his name was used instead of Rob's. Rob and Larry were introduced to the ladies and gentlemen present, and after a few minutes' pleasant conversation the whole party entered carriages and were driven to the theater. Seats had already been engaged, and our heroes were shown to places in the front row of one of the proscenium boxes. The performance had not commenced, and as soon as Rob and Larry made their appearance, the orchestra struck up with: "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

The scene which followed baffles description. The theater was packed from pit to dome; every eye in that vast assemblage was fixed on the two boys; hats and handkerchiefs were waved on all sides, and from thousands of throats went up cries off: "Hurrah for Railroad Rob! Hurrah for Larry Dolan! Three cheers for the boy heroes!"

The cheers were given with a will, and repeated over and over again; the audience seemed to be wild with enthusiasm, and for a while it looked as if they never intended to stop hurrahing. If it were possible for two boys to blush themselves completely away, Rob and Larry would surely have done so. They were so much confused that they scarcely knew whether they were standing on their heads or their heels, and if they had followed their own inclinations, they would have got

out of the theater as quickly as possible. But Mr. Fillmore whispered to them to stand up and bow to the audience, and they did so as long as the cheering continued. At length, to the infinite relief of the boys, the curtain arose, order was restored, and the performance commenced.

"How do you feel?" Rob asked Larry, in a whisper, after they sat down.

"Shure, I'd sooner be up to my neck in the worst bog in County Kerry than where I am."

"That is my mind to a dot; I feel as if I could crawl into a knot-hole."

The boys, however, consoled themselves with the idea that nothing further would be done to direct attention to them, but in this they were disappointed, for it was a variety performance, and several of the actors "got off gags" about them, which brought down the house every time. At length, however, the performance came to an end, and when Rob and Larry got back to the hotel and retired to the room which they occupied together, they experienced a feeling of relief which may be imagined, but cannot be described.

"It's a holy show they made of us entirely," said Larry, as he filled his pipe for a quiet smoke.

"Yes," answered Rob, "and I'd rather take a beating than to go through with it again."

"Sure, it's foine watches they give us, anyhow," remarked Larry, drawing out his elegant timepiece and examining it with unconcealed satisfaction.

"There is no doubt of that," replied Rob, looking at his watch, "and we ought to be very grateful; but I hate all of this parade."

"An' so do I."

"If you have no objection, to-morrow I will ask Mr. Fillmore to send us back and let us go to work."

"You'd better, for it's a little pace we'll have, I'm thinkin', while we stay here."

This having been determined upon, the boys rolled into bed and were soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER XI.—Off to San Francisco.

True to his resolution, Rob the next morning asked Mr. Fillmore to send him and Larry back to some point on the Union Pacific Railroad, and let them go to work. But Mr. Fillmore, after listening to the reasons for this request, laughed and said:

"My dear boy, I fully appreciate your modesty, and honor you for it, but you are too sensitive; the attentions which you and Larry have received are such as any man might be proud of, and you will no doubt remember them with pride in the future."

"That may be, sir," replied Rob, "but they distress us now."

"Well, well, say no more about it; Mr. Towne has promised to go to San Francisco with us to-morrow, and then you will be free from annoyance. In the meantime you and Larry must not think of going back, for I shall be very much disappointed if you do not make the entire trip with me."

This was said in such a kind manner that Rob could not for the life of him say another word on

the subject, but went back to Larry and reported progress.

"Be jabbers, we can stay in our rooms, thin," said Larry.

"We can do better than that," replied Rob. "Let us go and look at the machine shops."

This suggestion was acted upon, and the boys spent a very pleasant day in the workshops of the Central Pacific Railroad Company. The next morning, bright and early, the two boys, with Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Towne, left Sacramento in the private car of the latter gentleman, and in due time arrived at San Francisco, and put up at the Grand Hotel. Mr. Fillmore had a great deal of railroad business to attend to, so the boys were left to themselves most of the time. But, of course, in San Francisco and its vicinity they found plenty of things to interest and amuse them. They visited the important public buildings, saw money coined at the mint, went to Woodward's and other public gardens, wandered through the Chinese quarter, with its queer sights and odd signs, sailed on the splendid bay, and, in short, had a good time generally, just as two wide-awake young fellows, with plenty of money and leisure, would be likely to do. In this way five days quickly passed, and on the sixth the boys hired a horse and drove out to the celebrated Cliff House, on Point Lobos, which is on the southern side of the entrance to the Golden Gate. After partaking of a hearty dinner at the hotel, Rob and Larry strolled along the cliffs until they were opposite the Seal Rocks, so called from the scores of seals which are constantly swimming around or climbing upon them. Seating themselves in a cozy little recess in the cliff, the boys gave themselves up to the enjoyment of inhaling the fresh, balmy breeze of the Pacific, and looking at the seals gamboling in the surf and on the rocks. An hour or an hour and a half passed; the breeze freshened to a gale, and the waves began to thunder on the shore. The tumult of the wind and waves made conversation somewhat difficult, and the boys concluded that they had better start back to the city.

But what sound can drown the faintest whisper of the human being who is the object of strong passion—whether of love or hate? Just as the boys were about to move they heard, above the roaring of the rising storm, the tones of a voice which they had good cause to remember. Panting and breathless with strong emotion, they cowered down in their recess, where they were screened from observation, and as they listened they heard the following words:

"Well, as I was saying, ever since the smash-up at Medicine Bow River the cavalry have been scouring the country far and wide, and as the gang has to keep hid until the storm blows over, I took advantage of the opportunity to come to San Francisco."

The speaker was evidently not more than a yard or two distant, though he was hidden from view by the rocks, but Rob and Larry would both have been willing to take an oath that they knew who he was. Being eager to hear more, however, they merely exchanged glances and remained motionless.

"Which, I dare say, is the safest and most pleasant course you could have adopted," some

one replied to the above remarks, in a smooth, but rather sneering tone.

"There is where you miss it," said the first speaker. "I am not in search of pleasure just now, and if I were, San Francisco is the last place in the world where I would seek it."

"It would not be a very healthy place for you, truly, if you were recognized."

"You can bank on that."

"What did you come for, then?"

"I wanted to sell that lot of jewelry which I gave you."

"Gave, indeed! I rather like that. I paid you twice as much for the articles as any regular fence would have done."

"That is all bosh; but let it pass. Can you think of any way by which I can get possession of the girl?"

"It is a great pity that you could not carry her off when you tried to do so."

"Yes. I had the devil's own luck, and it makes me madder than a hornet to think that I was balked by two mere boys, for they were scarcely grown."

"I don't think that you can succeed in carrying her off from Fort Steele."

"I fear not."

"We must get the old man to bring her to San Francisco."

"I don't see how that can be done."

"I think that we can manage it with the 'Valuable Intelligence' dodge."

"How?"

"By putting an advertisement in the papers that Percy Howard, or any of his children, will hear something very much to their advantage if they will call at——"

Just at this moment the two rascals moved away, and neither Rob nor Larry could hear another word, though they strained their ears to do so.

CHAPTER XII.—An Unsuccessful Chase.

Rising cautiously from their place of concealment, Rob and Larry saw the two men whose conversation they had overheard sauntering back toward the hotel. After waiting a short time, so as to allow the men to get a little further ahead, the boys issued from the recess in the cliff, and followed them. One of the men was short and stout, but the other was tall and broad-shouldered, and the latter—as the reader has no doubt already surmised—the boys felt certain was Red Dick, chief of the train-wreckers. But when Rob and Larry had got a chance at the hotel to look at the face of the tall man without attracting attention, they could scarcely refrain from uttering exclamations of astonishment.

Instead of the savage-looking outlaw, with bristling red hair and beard, and cruel, blood-shot eyes, whom they expected to see, they saw a mild-mannered man, with glossy black hair and whiskers, and who wore a pair of green goggles, which effectually concealed his eyes. The dress of the supposed outlaw also added to the bewilderment of the boys. He was dressed in an irreproachable suit of black broadcloth, and if it had not been for a magnificent solitaire diamond which trembled with imprisoned fire on the bosom

of his immaculate shirt, nine out of ten ordinary observers would have thought that he was a minister of the Gospel. Everything about the appearance of the man was so entirely different from what they expected that the boys were badly staggered. But it occurred to Rob that, after all, the man before him might be Red Dick cleverly disguised, so drawing Larry to one side, he said:

"Go and have our horse and buggy got ready, so that we can start at a moment's notice."

"Sure he'd know us if he wor Red Dick."

"I am by no means certain of that, for he only saw us about dusk and after dark, during moments of great excitement; besides, we are dressed very differently from what we were then, and have both had our hair cut recently."

"Yis, and me mustache has grow'd since thin."

Rob secretly chuckled at the idea of Larry's appearance being changed by the few straggling hairs on his upper lip, but he gravely replied:

"There may be something in that. But go ahead and see about the horse while I keep an eye upon our man."

Larry made no further remark, but did as he was requested, and soon returned with the information that the horse and buggy were ready. Rob, of course, did not know whether the man he suspected would return to San Francisco that afternoon or not, but supposed he would do so, for not one out of a thousand of those who visit the Cliff House remain overnight. Nor was Rob mistaken in his supposition, for in less than an hour after the two men returned to the hotel, the short, stout one—who had the appearance of a prosperous sporting man—ordered that his team should be brought out. A few minutes later a spanking pair of bays, drawing a light trotting wagon, were brought to the door, and the two men took their seats in the vehicle and started toward the city. Rob and Larry lost no time, but jumped into their buggy and followed. Soon after starting the driver of the bays "let them out," and they flew along the road at a three-minute gait.

Slash—slash—slash! fell the whip on the horse in the buggy, but Rob soon stopped whipping him, for he saw that it was utterly impossible for him to keep up with the team in front. Fainter and fainter became the patter of the bay trotters' eight hoofs as they swept over the ground in their tearing trot. Rob and Larry were left behind as if they had been standing still, and when they finally reached the city the wagon which they started to follow had long since disappeared in some one of the numerous streets.

"Confound it!" said Rob, "this is the worst luck I ever had; the longer I think of it, the more firmly am I convinced that the man we suspected was Red Dick, and I'll never be satisfied until I hunt him down!"

"I'm wid ye ev'ry toime," replied Larry; "but what will we be afther doin' first?"

"We had better see Mr. Fillmore as soon as possible."

"An' get laughed at for lettin' Red Dick slip through our fingers so nately?"

"No—no; he will not blame us, you may be sure, though he will no doubt feel sorry that we were not more successful."

And Rob was right. Mr. Fillmore was at the

hotel when the boys reached it, and after listening with breathless interest to what they had to tell, said:

"I should probably have done exactly as you did under the same circumstances. But if it was really Red Dick, his arrest would have saved thousands of dollars to Pacific Railroad companies."

"Perhaps we can find him yet," suggested Rob. "I don't think he has any idea that we suspected who he was."

"Well, that matter will have to be attended to by the detectives, for we must go east on the next train."

"Ah, indeed!"

"Yes; every man ought to be at his post; it is now evident that the burning of the American River bridge was the work of an incendiary."

"Has he been captured?"

"No, and probably never will be."

"That is bad."

"Yes; but it is not the worst news I have; there is wild work going on along the line of the Union Pacific Road; within the last forty-eight hours two express cars have been robbed, and a passenger train wrecked and plundered."

"Is it possible?"

"There is no doubt of it, and that is not all; the railroad and telegraph lines have both been cut west of Bitter Creek, and the military authorities here have grave reasons to believe that Fort Steele and several other points near by have been captured by Indians and renegade whites."

Rob heard no more, his anxiety about Lucy Howard completely unmanned him, his head spun around, he gasped for breath, and if Larry had not supported him to a bed he would have fallen to the floor.

CHAPTER XIII.—Rob Undertakes a Difficult Job.

Larry, with Mr. Fillmore's assistance, laid Rob on the bed, removed his collar and cravat, sprinkled water on his face, and commenced to chafe his hands. But Rob almost immediately began to recover from his fainting fit—if fainting fit it could be called—for he did not entirely lose his senses. Though his weakness was of brief duration, he continued to have a dull, heavy pain at the heart, and he fully realized the fact that he loved Lucy Howard with all the strength of his strong, earnest nature. Strange as it may seem, Rob was not fully aware of this fact before, for, though he was conscious of feeling a strong interest in Lucy, he had not attempted to analyze his feelings. But now he had no further doubt on the subject, and the idea that the girl who had won his heart was murdered, or in the hands of the Indians and lawless white men, almost drove him frantic.

"Never mind about rubbing my hands," he said. "I am better now," and he sat up on the edge of the bed.

"I'd lie down a little while, if I were you," replied Mr. Fillmore, "and you will be all right by the time we have to leave."

"When will we go?"

"On the train which starts at forty-five minutes after six this afternoon, and in the meantime I will send for a detective, so that you can give him a description of Red Dick."

Thereupon Mr. Fillmore left the room, and Rob remarked to Larry:

"I never had such a strange swimming in my head before. I feel as if I could neither see nor stand up."

"An' no wonder," replied Larry. "Sure, the bad news took away me breath entirely."

"But, after all, it may be a false alarm, for Colonel Morrow, who was in command at Fort Steele, said he could hold the place against any number of Indians."

"I remimber it well, an' I'm thinkin' we'll foind Miss Lucy and the rest av thim safe enough."

"Heaven grant it may be so; but if they have been carried off or murdered, I'll never rest until I avenge them."

"Nor I."

The conversation which followed between the two boys was, as may readily be supposed, in relation to their hopes and fears about their friends at Fort Steele, and need not be repeated here. About an hour after he went away, Mr. Fillmore returned with a detective who had been detailed by the chief of police to search for Red Dick, and arrest him if possible. Rob gave a description of the man whom he believed to be the outlaw, and the officer, after promising to communicate with Mr. Fillmore if Red Dick was found, took his leave.

Mr. Fillmore and the boys then took a carriage and were driven to the wharf of the Central Pacific Railroad Company, crossed over the bay to Oakland on the steamer *El Capitan*, and started east on the train which left a few minutes afterward. Over dizzy trestles, through endless snow sheds and dark tunnels, along by granite cliffs and sparkling lakes and streams sped the train, until the summit of the Sierra Nevada mountains was passed, and then went spinning down the eastern slope into the hot, thick alkali dust of the plains. Night and day, through rain and shine, they were carried onward at an average speed of twenty miles an hour; but, owing to their impatience to get ahead, Rob and Larry thought their progress was unusually slow.

Eagerly they inquired at the different stopping places for news about Fort Steele, and Mr. Fillmore repeatedly telegraphed for information, but the only reliable intelligence which could be procured was that the Indians had cut the railroad and telegraph lines east of Bitter Creek, and all communication beyond that point was stopped. From what could be gathered, it seemed more than probable that a number of stations had been captured, and there were no end of rumors about atrocities which were said to have been committed by the red devils. Many were the blood-curdling stories which Rob and Larry heard about the fate of persons who were captured by the Indians, and though there was good reason to believe that very few of the narratives had any foundation in fact, the boys could not help listening to them, and were very much depressed by what they were told. On reaching Ogden, which is the point at which the Union and Central Pacific railroads connect, Mr. Fillmore expected to ascertain the true state of affairs; but in this he was disappointed, for little more was known there than had already been heard along the line. At Ogden Mr. Fillmore and the boys remained only about two hours, then left on a train with

a company of United States infantry, and a number of volunteers for the scene of the disturbances.

At Bitter Creek, which was reached without any incident worthy of note, Captain Wickliff was found with his company of cavalry, and there it was ascertained that Red Desert, Washakie, and Creston, stations to the east, in the order named, had all been attacked and destroyed. There were five locomotives and a number of freight cars at the station, and while some of the latter were being attached to the train, for the accommodation of the cavalry company and their horses, Rob said to Mr. Fillmore:

"If you will let me, I'd like to take one of those engines out of the roundhouse and go on a few hundred yards in front of the train."

"It is a good idea," replied Mr. Fillmore, "and may save the train from meeting with a serious accident; but I don't like to expose you to the risk."

"Never mind the risk, sir, and if anything should happen to me, it had much better be to one or two than to a hundred."

Rob lost no time, but with the assistance of Larry and the wiper, got up steam on the "Juno," which he was told was the best engine in the roundhouse, and brought her out on the track in front of the train.

"You ought to have two or three men with you," suggested Mr. Fillmore, when Rob reported that he was ready.

"All I need is a fireman," replied Rob; "and I'd rather have Larry than any one else."

"But one of you may be hurt, and to guard against accidents I think there should be some one else on the locomotive."

"I'll go with him," put in a tall man with a patch over one of his eyes, and light-brown hair, which looked as if it was pasted down against the side of his face.

"Do you think you can fire a locomotive?" asked Mr. Fillmore.

"Oh, I kin sling in ther wood and coal," replied the man, with a decided nasal drawl.

"All right; get on the locomotive then. And now, Rob, you had better start; keep a sharp lookout, and don't run faster than ten miles an hour. We will follow along some three or four hundred yards behind you."

The man who had offered to go with Rob and Larry on the locomotive was one of those who volunteered and came with the soldiers from Ogden, and he also came from San Francisco on the same train with Rob, who did not like his looks at all and would willingly have dispensed with his company. But of course it would have been very rude to have suggested this, so Rob, with his unwelcome companion, got on the locomotive where Larry was already awaiting him, and started off on his self-imposed mission, which was perilous enough to have made the boldest think twice before undertaking it.

CHAPTER XIV.—Larry's Peril.

It was some time after sundown when Rob, on the locomotive "Juno," started from Bitter Creek station. But as the sky was perfectly clear and

there was a full moon which made it nearly as bright as day, neither the headlight of the Juno nor that of the engine drawing the train were lit, and it was understood that the whistles were not to be sounded any louder than might be absolutely necessary to give signals to respective engineers. For it was feared that the headlights and whistles might attract the attention of prowling savages, even though they were so far away that they would not otherwise know that a train was passing. In which event, it was more than probable that the train would be fired into, and, of course, that was to be avoided if possible.

After proceeding about five miles, the keen eye of Rob detected something on the track, so he signaled to the engineer of the train to stop, brought the Juno to a standstill, and went forward on foot to investigate. He found several heavy piles of timber placed on the track in such a position that if a train had come in contact with them it would inevitably have been derailed and wrecked. Fortunately the rails had not been displaced, and as soon as the timbers were thrown off the track the two engines and train proceeded on their way. No further obstruction was encountered on the track, nor were any Indians seen; but the depots at Red Desert, Washakie, Creston and Separation were all found to be burned to the ground, and the mutilated, charred and blackened remains of human beings, found among their smoldering ruins, told but too truly the fate of those who had formerly occupied them. At each of these stations the train stopped for a short time, and some of the spectacles were horrible beyond comparison. Men hung suspended, literally flayed alive. Under some a slow fire had been kindled until strangulation came as a tardy mercy for relief.

Among the bodies of the slain were those of several women and children, whose helplessness and innocence availed them naught, for they were murdered and mutilated like the rest. The men hushed their rough voices as they gazed at these evidences of tigerlike ferocity, and they swore to exact a terrible revenge in tones which, if low, were deep. At Rawlings, thirteen miles and a half from Separation, twenty-one men were found who had barricaded themselves in the machine shop, which was of granite, and repulsed the savages. They hailed the arrival of the troops with acclamations, but expressed a willingness to remain and defend the valuable railroad property at Rawlings, and Mr. Fillmore thought it best to leave them where they were. The intelligence received about Fort Steele from the defenders of Rawlings station was vague, but very pressing. They stated that many of the Indians were dressed in United States' uniforms, and that they boasted of having captured and plundered the fort. It was also ascertained that when leaving Rawlings, the Indians threatened to return with re-enforcements, and went off toward Fort Steele.

"Well, it is only about fifteen miles to Fort Steele, and we will soon know the worst," said Captain Wickliff, who, being the senior officer present, was in command of the expedition as a matter of course, and he directed that the train should proceed.

Rob, as before, went in advance with the Juno. Larry attended to the firing of the engine, and the tall man with a patch over one of his eyes

did as he had done while the locomotive was in motion, ever since he got on it; that is, he sat on the tender and kept a sharp lookout to the right and left, and in front, as if he every moment expected to encounter some danger. He got off at the different stations with the rest and looked at the burnt houses and the bodies of the slain, but evinced no disposition whatever to converse, and when a remark was addressed to him he replied in monosyllables. Even upon ordinary trips good engineers speak but seldom, for they must constantly be on the lookout to prevent anything about their engines from getting out of order, and at the same time must keep the strictest watch of the track ahead and be ready—nerved for any emergency that can possibly arise.

Therefore, during the dangerous night run of which I am speaking, Rob, fully appreciating how much might depend upon his care and watchfulness, was so completely absorbed in the discharge of his duties that he scarcely gave a thought to the man with a patch on his eye, after the temporary feeling of annoyance caused by his getting on the engine had subsided. With Larry, however, the case was different; he had nothing to do but to throw fuel into the furnace occasionally, and the rest of the time was at leisure. The novelty of his position, and the incidents of the night ride, with its attendant dangers, excited him and made him feel like talking. Rob had no time to listen or to answer him, so he carried on a kind of disconnected conversation with the man on the tender. But it was emphatically a very one-sided affair, for Larry did nearly all of the talking, the taciturn man only occasionally answering with a nod or a grunt, and apparently paid out little attention to what was said to him. Just after leaving Rawlings, however, when Larry happened to speak of the encounters of himself and Rob with the train-wreckers, the apathy of his auditor disappeared, his eye gleamed like a spark of fire, and he uttered an oath so fierce and bitter that Larry started back in astonishment, though he very naturally attributed this unexpected ebullition of temper to a feeling of indignation against the outlaws. Larry, however, had but scant time to speculate about the matter, for just at that moment Rob told him to fire up.

Grasping the shovel, Larry threw open the door of the firebox, and the strong glare from within made the white smoke which floated overhead look like a mass of lurid flame. The next instant Larry uttered a yell of mortal terror. For the man with the patch over his eye suddenly seized Larry from behind and raised him from his feet, with the evident intention of hurling him headforemost through the fire-hole into the roaring furnace.

CHAPTER XV.—A Terrific Struggle.

Larry, being grasped by the back of the neck and the waistband of his pantaloons, could do nothing whatever to defend himself, though he saw that he was on the point of being thrown into the furnace, where the roaring fire glowed with such an intense heat that the eye could scarcely bear to look upon it. But Rob, who was looking ahead along the track, on hearing Larry's cry of terror, wheeled around and instantly

sprang to his assistance. Nor was he the fraction of a second too soon, for just at that time the tall man, with one swing of his sinewy arms, attempted to throw Larry through the fire-hole into the furnace. And this diabolical purpose would no doubt have been accomplished if Larry's head and shoulders had not come in contact with Rob's legs as he leaped forward. This caused Larry to diverge to one side and prevented him from going through the fire-hole; but his head struck against the outside of the furnace and he fell on the floor of the engine, stunned and insensible.

With a cry of baffled rage, which sounded more like the roar of an infuriated wild beast than the utterance of a human being, the tall man threw himself upon Rob. Rob was somewhat staggered by the force with which Larry struck against him, and the onset of the tall man was so sudden and furious that he was borne backward nearly off his feet. Had he fallen, his fate would have been sealed at once. But as he instinctively grappled with his assailant, he fortunately got his right hand in the cravat of the tall man and held on like grim death. Though Rob could not be thrown down while he retained his grasp on the man's cravat, he was at first in a very disadvantageous position, being bent back so that he could not exert his strength to much advantage. Luckily his left hand came in contact with a lever, which moved when he pushed against it, but offered sufficient resistance to give him a purchase that enabled him to assume an erect attitude. Though Rob did not know it at this time, the lever which did him such good service was the one that controlled the throttle-valve, and when it was moved it gave the Juno all the steam there was. Like a greyhound let loose from its leash when the game is in sight, the engine darted forward with rapidly increasing speed. It bounded like a mad thing on the rails; the couplings of the tender creaked and strained; the red-hot cinders from the chimney looked like the trail of an enormous rocket, and the glare from the furnace flew like flashes of aurora borealis along the ground. The swaying motion of the locomotive grew to a quick, swinging jolt, and the sound of the opening and shutting of the valves, as they alternately let on and cut off the steam, became faster and faster till they rattled like the continuous roll of a drum. The steam monster seemed instinct with life, and as it swept onward in its wild career, although not a breath of air was stirring, a hurricane, cold and piercing, seemed to be tearing by it.

The engineer of the train on which the troops were had been directed to keep along some four hundred yards in the rear of Rob, and on seeing the Juno dash ahead, he supposed it was an indication that the track was all clear and endeavored to keep up, but owing to the weight of the train it was left farther and farther behind every moment. But Rob was in no condition to notice any of these things, for he was struggling desperately for his life. Locked together so closely that neither of them could draw a weapon, he and the tall man swayed to and fro in the narrow space on the engine, and strained every nerve to overcome each other. At first Rob thought that he had encountered a madman, but early in the struggle a brown wig fell from the

head of his adversary and the patch from over his eye, and Rob saw that he was grappling with Red Dick himself. But this discovery in nowise daunted Rob, but rather enraged him, and he cried out:

"Now I know you, you scoundrel!"

"You won't know anybody much longer," replied Red Dick, grinding his teeth together and endeavoring to force Rob against the boiler and furnace, so as to burn him.

But Rob was active as a cat, and managed to whirl Red Dick around and press him against the heated furnace, which made him howl with pain, though the contact was only a moment's duration. Owing to the confined space in which they were, neither Red Dick's superior strength nor Rob's greater activity could be exerted to the best advantage, and it is hard to say how the desperate contest would have ended if something had not have occurred which neither of the combatants expected. Larry, after being trampled on a number of times, regained consciousness, and having a good hard head of his own, he quickly realized what was going on. He was soon on his feet, but owing to the jolting and jumping of the train and the struggles of the two antagonists, he could not immediately aid Rob. But in a few moments he got a chance to clap a pistol against Red Dick's head and fire. Uttering a yell of pain and horror, Red Dick sprang back so violently that he was not only jerked loose from Rob, but leaped off the train. How he struck the ground neither of the boys saw, for Rob, finding that the engine was running away, directed Larry to swing on the brake of the tender, while he cut off the steam. He did not dare to reverse while going at such terrific speed, for he knew that if he did so the steam-chests would probably be burst. At first it seemed as if it would be impossible to get the locomotive under control, and Rob did not succeed in stopipng it until he was within sixty yards of the depot at Fort Steele. As the engine came to a stop, a perfect host of painted savages sprang up on all sides, yelling like fiends, and opened fire on the two boys.

Bang! bang! crack! pop! bang! went the guns, and the bullets whistled around the engine or crashed against it thick as hail. Rob, however, heeded them not, but stood as if he had been turned to stone, with his eyes fixed on the depot. The lower part of the building was in flames, and at a window in the upper story, where it did not seem possible that mortal aid could avail her, he saw Lucy Howard. She, too, recognized Rob, and kneeling at the window, she stretched her snowy arms toward him in a mute appeal for help.

CHAPTER XVI.—Train-Wreckers and Indians.

Even at the present day there is little known of the country around the head waters of the North Platte River, save that it abounds in large game and hostile Indians. The mountains in the North Park of Colorado, where this stream rises, are densely timbered, and from that locality many cross ties were procured by strong, well-armed parties when the Union Pacific Railroads were being constructed. But small bands of hunters

and trappers, who, tempted by the prospect of sport or gain, venture into these perilous wilds, rarely ever return, for the Indians, jealous of intrusion in their hunting grounds, fall upon and destroy them.

Being a shrewd, far-seeing rascal, Red Dick, from the commencement of his career as a robber, cultivated friendly relations with the savages. For he did not know how soon he might need some place of refuge; and in the meantime he found it very convenient to have a strong force of red warriors who were ready at any and all times to join him and his band of train-wreckers in their marauding expeditions. When the attempt was made to blow up the depot at Fort Steele, in which it was supposed the ammunition of the garrison was stored, Red Dick had several hundred Indians ready to assist in the proposed attack upon the fort. The attempt to destroy the depot having failed, Red Dick abandoned his intention of attacking the fort, told his Indian allies to return to their homes, and went to San Francisco. Before starting home he also gave strict orders that the band of train-wreckers should remain quiet in their hiding-place, for he was wise enough to foresee that if their place of concealment was discovered by the cavalry, who were searching for them, they would inevitably be dispersed or destroyed in a short time.

Now there are very few things than an Indian regards as more disgraceful than to return from the warpath without either spoils or scalps. So after Red Dick departed for California the savages resolved that they would not go home empty handed, and in this determination they were encouraged by the train-wreckers, many of whom agreed to join them in a plundering expedition along the railroad. It may seem singular that Red Dick's men should so readily disobey his orders, but the reader must remember that in an association like that of the train-wreckers, held together only by the will of those composing it, there is necessarily considerable individual freedom of action.

In any event, inaction was too irksome, and the love of plunder too strong for the robbers to hesitate when there was a chance to avoid the former, and gratify the latter. Thus it happened that at the very time Red Dick was flattering himself with the belief that the disturbance caused by his operations on the railroad would quiet down before he returned, his men and their red allies were performing deeds which threw the whole country into a perfect blaze of excitement.

When Red Dick heard of this, he was eager to get back to his band, and, as related in the last chapter, volunteered to accompany Rob and Larry on the locomotive, intending whenever he got near to his men and the Indians, to slip off and join them. This he might have done, but his ungovernable temper being aroused by learning that Larry and Rob were instrumental in bringing about the disasters that recently overtook him and his band, he determined to murder the two boys, but failed in the attempt, as we have already seen. It is now high time that the reader was informed of what the train-wreckers and Indians did.

Sweeping along the line of the railroad for some fifty miles, they captured two trains of cars, and also captured and burned every ranch

and station, except Fort Steele and Rawlings, almost without opposition. The fiends in human form spared neither age, sex nor condition, and the most fortunate of those who were in their power were those who met with speedy death. For the hellish ingenuity with which the Indians of the far West torture their prisoners almost surpasses belief, and the details are too horrible to be related here. Gorged with plunder, and having many scalps and prisoners, the horde of red and white savages might have retreated without molestation, but, emboldened by success, they determined to capture Fort Steele. And the cunning and daring manner in which they made the attempt was worthy of a better cause.

In the first place, a small band of mounted Indians stampeded and drove off some cattle which were grazing at no great distance from the fort. A company of the Second Cavalry, who were the only mounted men in the garrison, were immediately sent to pursue these Indians, and were soon out of sight. Then a party of some two hundred Indians made their appearance beyond the range of the guns in the fort, and deliberately commenced to torture a number of white prisoners. Men were staked out on the ground and small fires built upon their stomachs, and out of the backs of other shrieking victims the red devils dug and pulled the sinews. All of this and much more could be plainly seen from the fort, and it was a sight which no American soldier could witness without panting for revenge.

In fact, scarcely had the horrible work commenced before officers and men alike clamored to be led against the savages. Nor did the lieutenant-colonel in command of the fort need any urging to go to the relief of the unfortunate prisoners. The only men left in the fort after the departure of the company of cavalry were three companies of infantry, numbering, rank and file, all told, one hundred and eighty-three men. Leaving twenty-five men commanded by Captain Atkinson to guard the fort, the lieutenant-colonel, with the rest of the garrison, marched out against the Indians. The savages fell back, skirmishing stubbornly with the soldiers, who followed them up until the latter were more than a mile distant from the fort. Then out of a ravine, where they had lain concealed, sprang up some three hundred Indians and attacked the infantry in the rear, while the savages, who had been retreating, turned and pressed fiercely upon them in front.

CHAPTER XVII.—The Capture of the Fort.

Attacked both in front and rear by a force outnumbering them more than three to one, the United States soldiers fully maintained the high reputation for gallantry and steadiness for which our troops on the frontier have ever been distinguished. Like hawks the Indians swooped at them, but were met on all sides by a bristling line of steel and a withering fire, which made them swerve back, and scatter as if a hurricane had struck them. But the savages retired only to return; dashing with marvelous rapidity and the most hideous yells back and forth, here and there, before and behind the soldiers, the painted

warriors showered bullets and arrows upon the devoted little band, causing many a brave fellow to bite the dust. It was clearly impossible to fight their way back to the fort over the open plain, in the face of such overwhelming odds, but no thought of surrender entered the minds of either officers or men.

The movements of the Indians were so swift that it was almost impossible to hit them with a bullet, and the soldiers began to grow confused and dizzy by the infernal maze of flying figures rapidly weaving out before their eyes. Faster and faster came the arrows and bullets until they flew thick as hailstones, and it was soon evident that if something was not done to escape from the fatal shower the whole command would be exterminated. Some hundred yards to the left of the spot where the soldiers made their stand there was in a bend of the river a position, thickly covered with rocks and trees, affording the cover so much needed and capable of much sturdy defense. This Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow noticed with the eye of a soldier and the quickness of a man who meant to do a soldier's duty.

Calmly, as if on parade, he gave the necessary orders, and his men, with fixed bayonets, fell upon the foe who were swarming around them, burst through their ranks and gained the coveted shelter, but left at least one-fourth of their number dead upon the plain. With their flanks and rear protected by the river, and sheltered in front by the trees and rocks, the soldiers were now in a position from which they could not very well be forced, except by a rush and desperate hand-to-hand fighting that is rarely the choice of Indians. Twice, however, the savages and white renegades charged boldly upon the position where the soldiers stood at bay, but were repulsed. Captain Atkinson, finally seeing that it was impossible to hold out any longer, deserted the fort after laying a train of powder to the magazine and firing it. They retreated to the railroad station, and shortly after a fearful explosion took place and scores of savages were blown to atoms.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Desperate Acts of Rob and Larry.

When the magazine in the fort blew up, the train-wreckers and Indians who were not killed or disabled were completely panic-stricken, and fled, scattering in every direction like a flock of birds among which a hawk has pounced. The train-wreckers, however, readily understood what had happened, and soon regained their presence of mind, and with the Indians, who were emboldened by their example, returned to the scene of the disaster. The spectacle of their unfortunate comrades, who were burned and mutilated beyond recognition, and of those who were still alive, but suffering horrible tortures, inflamed the passions of the Indians and train-wreckers to the highest degree, and they swore to have a bloody revenge.

Deciding upon a direct attack, the Indians selected fifty of their best riders, who dashed up to within thirty yards of the depot, wheeled and fired at the loop-holes in the walls. This maneuver was frequently repeated, but each time some

of the attacking party were slain. They kept up the siege, however, and in the night, under cover of darkness, a warrior managed to creep up near enough to shoot an arrow wrapped with ignited tow into a lot of straw and other dry trash, which was unfortunately lying under and against the side of the building. In a few minutes the lower part of the building was all in flames, and its occupants retreated to the upper story, preferring the fiery death which threatened them to falling into the hands of the savages. Those in the depot no longer sought to screen themselves, but appeared openly at the windows, hoping that they might be killed by bullets, and thus avoid being burned to death. But with fiendish malignity the Indians and train-wreckers ceased firing, and gloated over the prospect of seeing their victims perish in the flames. Just at this time Rob and Larry—as before mentioned—came dashing along on the locomotive "Juno," and stopped near the burning depot. Rob was so horrified at seeing Lucy Howard in the burning building that he heeded not the train-wreckers and Indians, although they commenced yelling and firing at him and Larry.

At the time I write of the Pacific Railroads had only been built a short time, and many of the Indians were afraid to approach an engine; but with the train-wreckers it was entirely different, and though Rob and Larry were fortunate enough to escape the shower of balls aimed at them as they stopped, they would soon have been disposed of if the train with the soldiers on board had not come thundering along, and stopped a short distance behind them. Little dreaming of what was in store for them, the Indians and train-wreckers rushed toward the train, expecting to get both plunder and prisoners. Recovering his presence of mind, Rob sprang to the tank of his engine, threw off the cover of the water-hole, and thrust his coat and handkerchief into the water, until they were completely saturated; then wrapping them around his head, he said to Larry:

"Get off the engine."

"What d'ye mane?" asked Larry.

"What I say."

Larry did not have the remotest idea of what Rob intended to do, but was determined to stick to him, so he moistened his coat and handkerchief, and tied them around his head as Rob had done. There was no time to argue the matter, and seeing that Larry intended to remain with him, Rob threw open the throttle valve, ran the engine into the very middle of the burning depot, and stopped in the midst of the flames. The moon and the burning depot made it nearly as light as day around the station at Fort Steele, though a ghostly white mist had begun to creep up from the river and spread over the plain. But inside of the cars it was dark, for the same reason that prevented the use of the headlight on the locomotive applied to the lamps in the cars, and they had not been lighted. Consequently those on the train could distinctly see what was going on outside, while they themselves were not visible. As the cars stopped, the Indians and the train-wreckers, who had whiter skins but blacker hearts, thronged around them thick as hops, little dreaming that they contained the fierce avengers of blood. A rare old time the savages expected

to have plundering and torturing and murdering the helpless creatures whom they supposed were now completely in their power, and to give their victims a foretaste of what was in store for them the band uttered blood-curdling yells, and brandished their gory weapons at the car windows.

But no shrieks of fainting women nor cries of frightened children were caused by this hideous demonstration. It was answered in a manner that was as startling as it was unexpected. Simultaneously the windows of the cars were thrown up, and from each and every one were thrust the black, ugly muzzles of guns and pistols. There was a yell from the exultant soldiers—not a cheery, honest hurrah, but a hoarse, hungry roar, such as tigers utter when they bound upon their prey—a sharp, deadly crash of small arms, and the leaden missiles of death tore through the crowd of savages, rending and slaying them. Nor were the villains allowed time to recover from their consternation.

The soldiers and volunteers, each one eager to be the first, poured out of the cars, a perfect torrent of living valor, and hurled themselves like famished wolves upon the foe. The charge was like a whirlwind; nothing living could withstand it. Knowing that to pursue on foot would be useless, Captain Wickliff and his company of cavalry ran back to the train, jumped their horses off the cars, mounted, and were soon on the haunches of the flying foe, and their sabers rose and fell, cleaving skulls and lopping off limbs until they became crimson with blood from hilt to point. Knowing that it was the best thing they could do to save themselves, the savages and train-wreckers stuck together as they retreated, parrying as well as possible the saber strokes with their rifle barrels, and keeping up an irregular fire which laid many a bold soldier low.

Lurid and canopied in smoke wreaths, the struggling mass kept right onward; its course was marked by the fallen, and ever and anon, from out of the powder-ball which enveloped it, dashed a riderless horse and scurried away over the plain. Seeing this struggling, fighting mass of men surging toward them, the savages who had been besieging the soldiers from Fort Steele in the bend of the river, were panic-stricken and fled. Soon as the force in front of his position disappeared, Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow determined to take a hand in the fight which was raging. His men, though they had been without food ever since they took shelter among the rocks, were eager to avenge their comrades who fell on the day the fort was invested, and hailed their commander's determination with enthusiasm.

Leading his men along a shallow ravine, Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow posted them on its edge at the point toward which the savages and their antagonists were moving. A number of the cavalrymen had fallen, and though the company still hung on the traces of the savages and train-wreckers, their charges were neither so incessant nor furious. Consequently, the savages and their white companions were able to retreat with greater rapidity than when first attacked by the cavalry. On they came, in a disorderly crowd, little dreaming of the grim death crouching in their way on the edge of the ravine.

"Make ready!"

Lieutenant-Colonel Morrow spoke in a low tone of voice, but his men were listening so intently for the order that they all heard him. Sixty dark muzzles crept out to the front, and waited there, gaping.

"Take aim!"

"Fire!"

The edge of the ravine was fringed with flame, there was the sharp, crashing sound of many guns fired at once, and a storm of bullets, fired at point-blank range, mowed down the savages by dozens. Staggered by the close, deadly volley, the Indians and train-wreckers reeled back, uttering yells of terror and dismay, while the soldiers, leaping out of the ravine, dashed down upon them with the bayonet. Caught between the infantry and cavalry, as it were between two inexorable jaws which crushed and destroyed them, the outlaws and savages made superhuman exertions to escape, but beyond a few scattering shots fired by the boldest in retreat, there was no further resistance. Scattering in the wildest confusion, and throwing away arms and every other encumbrance, they fled with feet winged by mortal terror. Pursuit the infantry made none, but the cavalry chased and cut down the villains, as long as the nature of the ground permitted. But why follow the deadly work under the sky and the stars? When it was ended there were few of the train-wreckers and Indians left to tell the tale, and the victors, weary with slaughter, marched back to Fort Steele.

CHAPTER XIX.—A Brave Deed.

When Rob ran the locomotive into the burning depot and stopped, it looked as if he had lost his senses, and was deliberately throwing away his life. Therefore, Larry could not possibly have given a more striking and unmistakable evidence of his perfect devotion to Rob than he did by remaining on the locomotive. Rob himself knew that he was taking a fearful risk, but was determined to save Lucy Howard or perish in the attempt; and without hesitation staked his existence on the success of an experiment which had never been tried before. He had read and been told that steam would extinguish fire, and upon this fact he relied, though he scarcely dared to hope that under the circumstances it would work.

When he entered the burning depot he felt as if he was going into a furnace. He did not falter, however, but stopped the locomotive in the middle of the building, threw open every valve which would allow the steam to escape, and left them open. In an instant the depot was filled with a blinding cloud of steam, and if Rob's and Larry's mouths and noses had not been covered with their wet handkerchiefs they might have inhaled it, in which event the consequences would probably have been fatal. Without waiting to see what effect the steam would have on the fire, Rob, with an ax in his hand, sprang off the engine on to the platform, and followed by Larry, who had snatched up a hatchet, rushed to the office door and commenced to hew it down, though the heat was so intense that it was difficult to breathe. A few heavy blows sent it flying from its hinges, and hurrying over the burning floor,

the boys rushed up to the second story. Their appearance was hailed with the wildest joy by the imperilled men, women, and children, and hope, which had been abandoned, sprang anew in every heart.

Lucy Howard, in common with the other women, was nearly frantic, and when Rob approached her she fell into his arms, exclaiming:

"You will save us, I know you will!"

In fact, nearly every one supposed that they could now get out of the depot without difficulty. Rob by no means thought that this was certain, but he was too wise to utter a discouraging word when he believed that the only chance for safety depended upon coolness and promptness.

"Have you any water?" he asked, in a voice which was heard by every one, after he had spoken an encouraging word to Lucy Howard.

"Several barrels full," replied Captain Atkinson.

"Then have all the blankets wetted, and let every one wrap themselves up in them quickly as possible, for we must get out of here immediately."

Many hands make light work, and in a few minutes all had wet blankets wrapped around them, so as to shield their bodies and all of their faces, except their eyes.

"Are you all ready?" asked Rob.

"Ready!" was the response.

"Then follow me; move quickly, and don't be afraid," saying which he took Lucy Howard in his arms and led the way downstairs.

The rest followed him, Mr. Howard and the other wounded and sick being carried by those who were well. When Rob got down into the office he thought that it was not as hot as it was when he passed through it a minute before. Of course, however, he made no pause to verify his supposition, but hurried through the room and on to the platform, along through which he ran, and sprang out of the burning building into the open air with his precious burden. He was immediately afterward joined by the remainder of the party, and their feelings on getting out of the depot where they expected to meet with a fiery death were too deep to be expressed in words.

CHAPTER XX.—Larry's Brother.

The train-wreckers and Indians had now retreated about half a mile from the train, for it must be borne in mind that the circumstances related in the two preceding chapters occurred simultaneously. There was no other place of shelter convenient, so the women, children, sick and wounded, were placed in some of the cars and sentinels stationed to give warning if an enemy approached. Rob, with Larry, Captain Atkinson, and such of the soldiers as were disengaged, then turned back to the depot, to see if it was possible to save any of its contents. To the astonishment of every one, for even Rob scarcely expected such a result, the flames were rapidly disappearing; in a few minutes the fire was completely extinguished, and the depot was saved. Rob explained that the fire had been put out by the steam which he allowed to escape from the locomotive, but at first his hearers could

scarcely credit what he said. The proof was before their eyes, however, and they were forced to admit that he was right. Soon as the smoke and steam had cleared away, so that it was safe to enter the depot, Rob and Larry went to take a look at the iron horse which had borne them so far and well.

The woodwork was found to be scorched, and the paint on the cab and tender was blistered, but otherwise the good engine was uninjured. While on the locomotive inspecting it, Rob found a large pocketbook lying near the fire-hole.

"Where in the world could this have come from?" he exclaimed.

"Sure, ther bla'gard who was on ther ingen must ha' dropped it," replied Larry.

"I dare say that he did," assented Rob, who thereupon opened the pocketbook, which was found to contain a large amount in greenbacks, and several letters and papers, directed to Richard Morgan. Postponing any further examination of the pocketbook until a more convenient time, Rob secured it about his person, and with Larry went out to meet the soldiers, who were now returning from the pursuit of the Indians and train-wreckers. Almost the first person the boys met was Mr. Fillmore, who had been taking an active part in the fight and had escaped without a scratch. He was delighted to see the boys, and when he learned how the depot was saved, expressed in unmeasured terms his admiration of Rob's indomitable courage and great presence of mind. By this time the sun had commenced to rise, and on every side could be seen the bodies of dead men, and traces of the handiwork of the Indians and train-wreckers. The interior of the fort, which a few days before had been a model of neatness, was now filled with blackened ruins.

About a quarter of a mile from the depot, where the outlaws and savages bivouacked, were found large quantities of plunder, many horses, and some twenty-five or thirty prisoners, whose lives had no doubt been spared for a time, so that the Indians could torture them to death at their leisure. While Larry was assisting in ministering to the necessities of these unfortunates, he came in contact with an Irishman, who was among the rescued, and asked:

"An' knew ye iver Mike Dolan in this counthry?"

"Sure, I wor wid him thray days ago," replied the man.

"Where?" asked Larry, in a high state of excitement.

"On his farm a matter of twinty miles down the road; it's more'n a year gone I've woruked wid him."

"Is he there now?"

"Sure he wor tuk by ther Injuns whin I wor."

"An' what bekim av him?" asked Larry, with a sinking heart, eagerly scanning the faces of the other prisoners in hopes that he might find his brother among them.

"Bejabers an' that's more'n I know meself," replied the man, whose name was O'Brien.

"How's that?"

"It wor late in ther av'nin' whin we wor tuk, an' ther red divils aftherwards kept thravlin' most av ther night, an' niver a horse wud they lind us, though it's plinty they had."

"Well, an' didn't Mike come wid ye?"

"He started wid us, but I niver laid me eyes on him aftherwards."

"Why?"

"Ye see, his leg wor hurted whin they tuk him, an' maybe he couldn't kape up; an'—an' he might have got away."

The honest fellow would willingly have produced the impression that Mike Dolan had escaped, though he believed that he had seen others during that terrible night march of which he had spoken. But Larry was too shrewd to suppose that his brother had escaped, when one of his legs was disabled, while others, who were unhurt, could not do so. In fact, Larry not unnaturally concluded that Mike was certainly dead, which was more than O'Brien knew to be the case, and his heart was nearly broken by the idea.

Rob tried in vain to console him, or make him hope that his brother might be alive. There was a great deal to be done, and every one who was able went to work with a will, Larry among the rest, for he was the last person in the world to remain idle when his services were needed. When the order was given to knock off from work every one was tired enough to sleep without rocking.

CHAPTER XXI.—Gathering up the Threads.

The morning after the occurrences mentioned in the preceding chapter, Rob examined the contents of the large pocketbook which he found on the locomotive. He first counted the money and ascertained that there was three thousand two hundred and some odd dollars, principally in large bills. Among a number of telegrams and other papers, relating to things of which he knew nothing, was a letter postmarked London, England. This letter, like all of those which had any address, was directed to Richard Morgan, and contained an advertisement cut from a newspaper which read as follows:

"Heirs Wanted.—If the heirs of Alice Howard (maiden name Arundel) will communicate with Lester Wallace, solicitor, Gray's Inn, London, England, they will hear something very much to their advantage. A liberal reward will be given for information of the said heirs, if alive, or for proof of their death."

The letter in which this advertisement was enclosed was as follows:

"London, Nov. 25th, 1868.

"Dear Dick:

"Old Arundel shuffled off this mortal coil on the 10th instant, after an illness of some two months. I called several times, but was refused admission, as he had taken up an idea that we were to blame for the way he treated his daughter, Alice, though, as you very well know, it was more his own fault than that of any one else. He made a will leaving all of his property to her children, and if you can find the girl and marry her you will make a big hit, as the estate is worth at least a million pounds sterling.

"If the children are dead, and you can forward proof of the fact, the solicitor, whose advertise-

ment is enclosed, will pay you three or four hundred pounds for the information.

"We are all well; write soon.

"Your affectionate father,

"B. B. MORGAN."

"Whew!" said Rob, "here is something that concerns Mr. Howard and Lucy," and he took the papers to that gentleman.

Mr. Howard, who was now sufficiently recovered from his wounds to sit up, was somewhat excited when he read the letter and advertisement; but Lucy, who had never seen her grandfather, was very little affected by hearing of his death, and seemed not to care much about being a great heiress. During the conversation that followed, Mr. Howard related his history. When a young man, Percy Howard, a native of New York, possessed a moderate fortune, while visiting England, met and fell in love with Alice Arundel, the only child of Sir Hector Arundel, the owner of a princely estate in Kent. Howard's love was reciprocated by Alice Arundel, but her father, who wished to keep his estate in the family, peremptorily refused his consent to their marriage, and ordered her to prepare to wed her cousin, Richard Morgan. Richard Morgan, whom the reader has known as Red Dick, was at that time a wild, reckless young man. Percy and Alice eloped and several children were born to them, although Alice's father wanted her to marry Richard Morgan, or Red Dick, as he was known. Morgan became a crook and later on met Lucy and Mr. Howard in the West. His plots against them were frustrated by Rob and Larry.

"Well," said Rob, as the conversation was being concluded, "Red Dick will not trouble you again, for without doubt his neck was broken when he fell off of the engine."

"I cannot feel sure he is dead until I see his body," replied Mr. Howard, "for I have a strong presentiment that he will turn up again."

CHAPTER XXII.—Conclusion.

Rob was rather disposed to laugh at Mr. Howard's idea that Red Dick would turn up again, but Mr. Fillmore, to whom he spoke about it, took a more serious view of the matter, and said:

"The rascal may not have been killed, after all; so suppose you fire up the Juno, hitch on a car, take a few men with you, and go and bring him back, dead or alive."

To this Rob of course assented, and as soon as steam could be made on the Juno, started off on his mission, accompanied by Larry and about a dozen volunteers. But much to Rob's astonishment and chagrin, Red Dick could not be found, though the party discovered where a man had apparently fallen into a mud puddle by the roadside. That afternoon Rob and Lucy Howard happened to be alone. Then—well, Rob did not exactly know how it happened himself, but the next moment he had his arm around Lucy and was kissing her, while she, with her head on his shoulder, was laughing and crying at the same time. When they went to Mr. Howard and told him all, he kissed Lucy and shook Rob by the hand heartily, saying:

"You have won her bravely, and if I had the whole world to choose from, I could not find any one I would rather give her to."

Ten days afterward Mr. Howard was well enough to travel, and Mr. Fillmore not only placed a special train at the service of the party, but with a number of his own and of Rob's friends, determined to accompany them to Omaha. The locomotive attached to the train was the Juno, and Rob determined to act as engineer, with Larry as fireman. Nothing unusual occurred until some thirty miles had been passed, when a wild, ragged-looking man sprang from behind a rock beside the road in a deep cut and commenced to brandish his arms about. Almost before the engine stopped the man clambered up on it and said:

"Ther's murtherin' robbers waitin' at ther ind av ther cut, and they've put things on ther road."

"Whoop—hurrah!" yelled Larry, "it's Mike himself," and the next moment Larry was hugging and crying over his brother.

Rob immediately commenced to back the train, but before the train could be made to move backward a number of men on horseback dashed on the track in the lower end of the cut, and galloped toward the engine, yelling and brandishing pistols in their hands.

"Back with you!" cried Rob to Larry, "and uncouple the engine from the train."

Larry was all alive now; quick as a flash he sprang over the back of the tender and did as he was bidden. Rob, with grim determination, threw the throttle-valve wide open and charged the villains with the locomotive. The train-wreckers uttered yells of terror and tried to fly. Too late—too late! Like a thunderbolt the locomotive dashed amid the despairing wretches, crushing, mangling and destroying. On running the engine back to the train, Rob found the horrified passengers engaged in looking at the bloody scene in the cut, and they warmly thanked him for saving them.

Among the slain was Red Dick, whose head had been completely severed from his body by the wheels of the engine. Rob and Larry accompanied Mr. Howard and Lucy to England. On reaching London, Mr. Howard opened the mysterious iron box, took from it his marriage certificate, and the baptismal certificates of his children, and, armed with these proofs of Lucy's identity, had no trouble in securing her large fortune.

When Rob examined the box he found that it contained a cleverly contrived alarm, intended to scare off any one who tampered with the lock, and it was that which had frightened the express agent. Rob and Lucy were married in London, and Larry was, as a matter of course, Rob's best man. Then the whole party went to Ireland, and as Listowell, County Kerry, Larry, whom Lucy had insisted upon amply providing for, was united in the holy bonds of matrimony to "the girl he left behind him" when he first came to America.

Next week's issue will contain "A MILLIONAIRE AT EIGHTEEN; OR, THE AMERICAN BOY CROESUS."

CURRENT NEWS

CUT IN SUEZ TOLLS

Reduction in toll charges through the Suez Canal will be placed in effect Oct. 1, the Department of Commerce has been officially advised. The new rates will be 8.25 francs per ton for loaded vessels and 5.75 francs per ton for craft in ballast.

THE MANGO IN FLORIDA

The United States Department of Agriculture has secured through its agricultural explorers and by exchange with the British East Indian departments of agriculture one of the largest collections of mango varieties in the world, and now has in fruit, at its plant introduction station at Miami, Fla., about twenty varieties, selected from a much larger number. It is said that these selected varieties strikingly belie the many unkind things that have been said about the mango, and that are really applicable only to the inferior sorts. Some of them have hardly more fibre in them than a freestone peach and can be cut open lengthwise and eaten as easily with a spoon as a cantaloupe. They have a delicious odor, suggestive of pineapples. The mango is destined to become one of the important products of southern Florida, south of the line of heavy frosts.

SAINTS KILLED BY DEMONS

The murder and mutilation of three of the seven occupants of a camp of sadhus, or religious mendicants, outside the city of Rawalpindi has been attributed by the masses, Mohammedan as well as Hindu, to supernatural agency, and is reported by the frontier correspondent of the Englishman to have caused the greatest excitement throughout the Rawalpindi, Nowshera, and Peshawar districts, so that for the time being "politics is forgotten altogether."

The term sadhu is derived from a Sanskrit word denoting completeness, and means one who is perfect—a saint or sage. It is commonly used by all Hindu religious mendicants. Clad generally only in loin-cloth and with his body covered with ashes, the sadhu wanders up and down the country with his begging bowl in hand, and is held in great veneration and awe. Hence there is widespread belief that the crime was not the work of human beings at all, but of rakshahs, or demons, who in the days of the Hindu epics were often seen on earth, and have now returned.

In the morning the bodies of the three sadhus were found tied to trees and terribly mutilated. The surviving four men were cowering around a fire, muttering charms and in a great state of excitement and fear. They are reported to have informed the police that the camp was attacked by a band of men, who selected the three victims and cut them to pieces, warning the others that if they attempted to interfere they would also be killed.

But this did not prevent the rakshah theory gaining ground, and a panic ensued in the city.

All business ceased, shops were closed, and houses shuttered and barred. The bolder spirits went down to the scene of the crime to see for themselves, but what they saw only convinced them the more of demoniac agency.

PIKE'S PEAK SCALED 100 YEARS AGO

The 100th anniversary of the first ascent of Pike's Peak was celebrated in Colorado Springs July 14, when special exercises were held at the summit and along the automobile highway that climbs eighteen miles over a serpentine route to the top, 14,109 feet above sea level. Although Lieut. Zebulon M. Pike, the explorer, first discovered Pike's Peak in 1806, he never scaled the mountain, deeming the task impossible. But Dr. Frank James, a member of the expedition of Major Long, in 1820, essayed the feat on July 14, 1820, making the journey from Fountain Creek, near Colorado Springs, to the summit. Major Long, in honor of James' accomplishment, named the peak "James' Peak," but as early as 1840 trappers and plainsmen named it "Pike's Peak," and the name remained.

Since then 2,000,000 persons have visited the summit, it is estimated, the crowds of tourists in the last twenty-five years forming the bulk. In 1878 a bridle path was built; a wagon road to the summit was built in 1880, and in 1891 the cog-wheel railroad, nine miles long, was built. Burros were used also at that time.

In 1916 the present automobile road was built at a cost of \$300,000 after two years of construction work and many difficulties, especially in getting labor. This road is eighteen miles long, rises 6,695 feet in that distance, has an average grade of 7 per cent. and a maximum grade of 10 1-2 per cent., with 42 per cent. of the line in curves. It is twenty feet wide, with curves as wide as fifty feet.

In April, 1919, a Government war tank attempted to climb the Peak over the automobile highway, but could not get over the snowdrifts; however, a month later a caterpillar, used for artillery hauling, made the summit without difficulty. On Aug. 3, 1919, an airplane piloted by Alexander Lendrum of Colorado Springs, made a successful trip over the summit of the peak.

Pike's Peak is eight miles in an air line from Colorado Springs and the greater part of the mountain is controlled by the city of Colorado Springs for its watershed.

Walking races, burro races and motorcycle races have been made to the top, and many noted race drivers, including Ralph Mulford, Barney Oldfield, Hughie Hughes, took part in the automobile races in 1916. Mulford made the best time for the twelve-mile course from Crystal Creek to the summit, this being 18 minutes and 26 seconds.

This month the auto hill climbing contest, which was discontinued during the war period, will be resumed, as well as an airplane race around the peak from Denver.

CHARLIE CHAPMAN'S COURAGE

—OR—

THE BOY WHO TOOK CARE OF HIS MOTHER

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER III. (continued)

The first man pulled a wallet from his pocket. "Let's show him. But, remember any smartness and we will make the whole matter plain and clear? We want immediate settlement, and that right away."

The country youth was not well versed in banking and legal law, but he did know that there was more than one way to kill a goose.

And he wanted to learn the nature of this curious and unexpected demand.

"I am not afraid of any courts," said Charlie. "We are honest people, and so we don't mind lawyers or any of their kind. Let's see that signature."

He looked at the note, and saw that it was dated just six months before. He looked at the signature, and was startled, for it seemed a perfect signature of his father's.

"Where did you get that?" he asked.

"He signed it over in Berkville, where my office is," said the first man. "I am the lawyer here for the gentleman who owns the note. It is a real signature, and we can prove it."

Charlie looked at the other man.

He had gone to Berkville, a village about twenty-five miles from the farm with his father that day, truly enough. That part of the story might have fitted.

But Charlie Chapman remembered that he had not been out of his father's sight that entire day.

"Well, you are sure he signed it?" asked Charlie. "It's true he was in the village there that date."

"Of course," smiled the other one, cunningly. "You bet he was. We have half a dozen witnesses to prove all about it. Are you willing to settle?"

Charlie wanted to draw out their game.

"What if we can't pay that much cash now?"

"Oh, well, just give us some of the land here as security. This farm is worth about a thousand dollars." The man rubbed his hands gleefully as he gazed about. He seemed almost to think himself in position of owning the handsome country place, which was worth many thousands.

Charlie laughed.

"Here, Tige," he called to his bright shepherd dog which had been looking down from the portico by the house, "Sic 'em! chase 'em out!"

"What's that?" cried the first speaker.

"You know what it is," said Charlie. "I can swear that I was with my father all that day, and you are a pair of low tricksters trying to rob a widow and her son. But you don't get any more of this farm than what you might eat.

Now, you get off these grounds before you are bitten by my shepherd dog."

Tige had started down on the run, toward the two men, and he seemed to understand Charlie's command as though he were human.

The two men cursed and muttered, and one of them stepped forward to snatch up a cobble from the ground. But he did not reach the stone.

Charlie gave him a whack alongside the head which, though not a bruising blow, sent him off his balance.

Then the dog rushed up, and he chased the two men down the lane, with his nips and bounds, just as he would have rounded up some obstinate rams in the sheep pasture.

"Good riddance," muttered Charlie, as he turned back toward the farmhouse. "But I will hear from them again, and no mistake. There is something bad about those men and I know it just as well as anything."

Charlie's premonition of trouble was correct, as later events proved. But he did not say anything to his mother about the incident, for the manly fellow was determined to bear his own burdens and hers, too.

CHAPTER IV.

Charlie Turns Employer.

Charlie Chapman turned back to the house with a sense of bitterness. He was confident that he could defend his title to the home there, and yet the brazen impudence of these two tricksters proved that they were sure of their ground, in more ways than one.

"They have forged my father's signature there, but I will keep silent about it, until I find just what game they will play. As I don't want to run to him for help, the first pop out of the bag."

Such were the thoughts of the young fellow. But it was many days before he heard anything from the two men.

Meanwhile, the young chap had started pluckily into the work of organizing the farm labor. Charlie's father had been a remarkable man, and had handled all the farm work himself.

"I don't know enough," said Charlie, "and I am going to try something of my own scheme, mother, if you are willing to let me try this new plan."

"What is it, my son?"

"Well, I have heard that a man and his family—a wife and two children—have come to Fernbank looking for work. You know that old cornerrib, down behind the barn?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Chapman, "but that is not worth much, and although it's a big cornerrib, it would not do for a dwelling for human beings."

Charlie shook his head.

"I'll show you your mistake," said he. "I am going to turn that cornerrib into a house, and will give that poor fellow and his family a lodging place, if you are willing. You know that the people who make the most money in this world are not the ones who do manual labor themselves, but who manage others wisely."

His mother patted him on the shoulder.

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES.

CARD TEN YEARS IN MAIL

It took a postal card ten years and nine months to make a Thanksgiving journey from New Haven to Staten Island. The card was mailed in Highwood, a New Haven branch office, on Nov. 17, 1909, by B. B. Lynam, to Daniel Horrigan, a detective of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, who lives at 38 Montgomery avenue, Tompkinsville, Staten Island.

Lynam and Horrigan are boyhood friends and have corresponded on all special occasions for twenty years, never missing a holiday except Thanksgiving, 1909.

The postal card, a reminder of the days when birds were cheaper than today, arrived Monday, Aug. 9. Horrigan is going to have it framed.

RIFLED OIL PIPES

The principle of the rifled gun is applied to pipes for pumping oil. The crude oil of California is mostly thick, viscous and difficult to pump through long lines. Heating cannot be successfully applied to a long pipe, and mixing with water results in an emulsion from which the oil cannot be readily separated. The best means of dealing with these viscous oils is by means of a pipe rifled on the inside, so that the oil, mixed with about 10 per cent. of water, is caused to whirl rapidly. The water, being heavier than the oil, seeks the outside and forms a thin film, which lubricates the pipe for the passage of the oil. The friction is thus so far reduced that the oil has been pumped easily through a line 31 miles long. The water and the oil come out entirely separate at the end of the line.

SWAM FORTY MILES WITH HANDS AND FEET SHACKLED

Henry Elionsky, formerly of New London, Conn., who doesn't think anything of swimming thirty miles with his hands and feet shackled, and who holds the record for long distance swimming (65 miles, made in New York waters), is about to try to swim 100 miles without emerging from the water.

According to present plans he will enter the water at the Brighton Baths, swim out to sea nine and a half miles and return, and then swim twice over a half-mile course that will be laid out in front of the Brighton Baths. He will then have covered twenty miles, and the given plan is to traverse the same course five times in all, making 100 miles.

On Nov. 2, 1913, while still in his teens, he towed a boatload of seven men, a weight of 1,262 pounds, from Brooklyn Bridge to Bay Ridge, a distance of eight miles. Although the water was icy, he showed no ill effects from it.

His thirty-mile swim, with hands and feet tied, from the Battery to Swinburne Island and return, was made in 10 hours 21 minutes on Aug. 2, 1914. On Nov. 14, 1915, he swam through Hell Gate with two men, weighing 323 pounds,

tied to his back. During the war he served in the navy as boatswain's mate and gave swimming lessons to the sailors.

YOUR BOY OR GIRL

The lessons of the school year that has just closed will have been studied in vain if the graduates, about to enter upon their chosen careers, have failed to learn that thrift and saving in their proper sense are quite as important as anything in the curriculum over which they have thumbed and labored. Many graduates, and, unfortunately, pupils of younger years are leaving the graded schools at this time and seeking employment.

This period represents a crisis in their lives which leads them either to loose habits or to the habit of thrift and ultimate prosperity. The inexorable decree, that in the sweat of his brow shall man earn his bread, cannot be set aside. Education makes a better workman in every field, but no man can hope to enjoy the fruits of his toil unless he has acquired habits of thrift in his early life.

The world owes no able-bodied slacker a living. He must go out among his fellows and earn it. The character of that living depends solely upon the mental and physical equipment with which he has been endowed, aided and developed by his own unceasing efforts.

The work slacker in peace times is as much a menace to his country as his prototype in times of war. He is costing his country millions every year and he it is who is pushing ever upward the cost of living through reduction of output and effort. More individual effort and more production will bring down the cost of living and thereby remove distress.

Thrift is the lever through which this war-worn world is to be stabilized, for neither the nation nor the individual can get back to a rational basis so long as the desire to indulge in reckless spending controls it. "Work and save" should be the slogan of the rising generation, for upon the character of those now entering upon man's estate depends the future of this nation.

In order to make it possible for the boys and girls in the Second Federal Reserve District to save their summer vacation earnings regularly and invest them systematically in Government savings securities, the Government Loan Organization has prepared a record sheet known as the "Savings Game." In case you have not as yet obtained a copy of the vacation savings sheet, be sure to call on your postmaster for a free copy.

BUY W. S. S.

"Twenty on the red," says the man who puts his money into speculative chances. "All of it where I can get it back with interest," says the man who buys Government securities. Government Savings Stamps are always worth more than paid for them.

BUY W. S. S.

DONALD FENTON'S LEAP

BY KIT CLYDE

"Above all things, Donald, as long as you remain in Ferndale, have nothing to do with any of the Dunstons. Do not recognize or speak to any of the hated tribe, at the risk of arousing my anger. That is all the order I give you. Amuse yourself as you see fit, but go not near that detested family, or——"

The sentence remained unfinished, but the stern look upon his father's face warned Donald Fenton that it would be dangerous to disobey the injunction.

"Do you still cherish the same hard feelings you did previous to my departure for Europe?"

"Time can never efface the memory of a wrong as great as mine, and during the ten years you have been away from me I have never forgotten, never forgiven it, and I never shall. That's a beautiful beast of yours in the stable. I admire not only your good taste in selecting, but your good fortune in securing so beautiful an animal."

"Ah, Midnight well deserves your praise."

"Better give her a chance to show her fine qualities in a dash over the Ferndale hills. Don't take the north road."

"Why not?"

"Because I bid you. Zounds! must I be questioned at every turn? Away with you! I shall be busy till dinner."

"So the old sore is not healed up, and the Fentons and the Dunstons, although living within a few miles of each other, must still treat each other as if they didn't exist. It's outrageous, and I dare swear my father has long ago forgotten in what the miserable quarrel originated," said Donald, as he left the library.

He was by this time on the lawn, and gazed about himself listlessly, taking little note of the lovely surroundings. The house and grounds of Ferndale were situated on the summit of a rocky hill, sparsely wooded, from which the surrounding country for miles could be viewed. Below it lay a deep valley, through which ran a road leading to a village some five miles distant. At a point about two miles, in the other direction, a branch road started.

This led to the Dunston estate, and was called the North Road. No one in the employ of old Richard Fenton was ever allowed to set foot upon it, and if any one of the private roads belonging to Fenton were ever trespassed upon by any of the Dunstons, whether of the family or of the dependents thereof, the matter was not lightly passed over.

Donald Fenton was the only remaining child of his father, and ever since a boy of nine years he had been in Europe, studying and traveling and helping to spend his father's money. He had but an indistinct remembrance of the feud, but even as a child he had considered it not only foolish, but wicked.

On his return home, a year or so after his mother's death, he was both grieved and annoyed to learn that the old difficulty still existed, and he determined to put an end to it, come what might.

As he stood on the lawn, gazing far away upon the blue outlines of the distant hills, the dark green of the tops of the trees in the gully, and the few fleecy clouds, glorified by the afternoon sun, the neigh of a horse sounded upon his ear and disturbed his reverie.

"Aha, my darling, I had forgotten you. Ho, Michael!" he called, to a man who was just passing a few rods off. "Saddle Midnight for me in a jiffy; I'm off for a scamper among the hills."

"Faix, I will, jist, Master Don. The black beauty is cryin' to get out."

And the man hastened away, and presently returned with one of the most beautiful black mares that ever was shod.

She gave a glad neigh as he approached, and pawed the ground impatiently with her beautiful foot, and by other signs showed her eagerness to indulge in a lively canter, a long, swinging trot, or a furious gallop. Donald sprang upon her back lightly, thrust his feet into the stirrups, and away darted the enchanting animal, and in a few seconds both horse and man were lost to sight among the trees.

The young man had ridden for two or three miles without taking particular notice of the direction, so occupied was he with his thoughts and the pleasure caused by the exhilarating exercise, when suddenly, as he was turning into a cross-road, which seemed by its lovely surroundings to afford a fit place for meditation, a strange figure rushed out and attempted to seize Midnight by the bridle.

"Hold! Dare to go further at your peril!" shrieked the figure, which was that of an old man, scantily clad in coarse, faded garments. "This is no place for the heir of Ferndale."

"Let go of my horse. Who are you?"

"The avenging angel of the house of Dunston! Yet would I spare you," added the singular being, whose mind appeared to Donald to be affected. "You are a comely youth, and a noble ——" he continued, in a softer tone, as he stepped aside, "and maybe it is your mission to unite the families so long at war, and end this terrible feud."

"End it I will if it is in any man's power to do it," answered Donald.

"Go thy way, then, but beware of enemies. Know you not that this is the North Road?"

"I care not what road it is so long as it pleases me," giving his horse the rein. "On, my good Midnight."

"Stay a moment; there is danger ahead."

"I fear it not; here is for your trouble," throwing him a silver dollar as he passed rapidly by.

"Silver!" muttered the old man as he picked it up. "Aha, there is a charm in silver. Maybe the end is coming, after all. We shall see—we shall see. He seemed a manly youth, verily."

It will be well to mention, in passing, that the old man had, when a youth of Donald's age, been struck on the head with a stone in an altercation between the tenants of the rival houses, and had been rendered partially insane. He had for years styled himself the "Avenging Angel," and many were the fights he led in person, displaying great valor, and though frequently defeated, he was constantly planning new

methods of harassing Mr. Fenton and the men in his employ.

Donald kept on at a good pace, the road rising at every step, when suddenly from behind a clump of trees three mounted laborers dashed out and furiously attacked him.

The boy drew his riding-whip and slashed vigorously about him, hitting one across the face with the stinging lash, and reversing his weapon dealt one a stunning blow on the shoulder with the heavily loaded stock, laming his arm and bestowing on the third, who approached too near, a crack between the eyes that temporarily blinded him.

He rode up the hill, and before long he could see the towers of a splendid mansion rising over the tops of the trees, and in a few moments dashed into a broad avenue lined with noble trees. On either side was a high wall of hewn stone broken at intervals with buttresses, pillars rising above the main line, on top of which were vases of choice flowers.

On one side of the road was a deep mountain lake, with steep banks.

As Donald approached he saw three ladies evidently in great distress, wringing their hands and uttering agonizing shrieks.

"Oh, save her—save her!" the foremost one cried, as she saw him.

He looked, and there in the waters of the lake was a beautiful young girl struggling frantically to save herself, and crying for help.

Donald seated himself as firmly as a rock in his saddle, tightened his grip on the reins, and dashing the spurs into Midnight's foam-flecked sides, urged the noble steed forward, with a snort of intelligence, made a flying leap over the moat and wall, and struck the water not far from the drowning girl.

It was but a moment's effort to seize the arm of the young lady as horse and rider went down, and when they arose again she was on the saddle with our hero, who guided Midnight to a spot where the bank was less precipitous, and in a short time all three were once more safe on land.

"How shall we ever thank you?" said the lady who had first attracted Donald's attention. "Tell us the name of her preserver."

"I am named Fenton."

At these words Blanche fainted.

Donald quickly caught her in his arms, and the house now being in plain sight, strode rapidly up the path with his inanimate burden, and reached the wide veranda just as a portly, white-haired old gentleman emerged from the house.

"I have heard of your noble conduct, young gentleman, from one who saw you make the leap and came at once to acquaint me with the facts. I can never repay you for this; but you must at least enter and change your saturated garments. Here, Lizzie, Martha, Abigail, somebody, attend to your mistress. Tell me your name, young gentleman, that I may know to whom I am indebted for this great benefaction?"

"My name is Donald Fenton."

"The heir of Ferndale?"

"The same, and you are——"

"Gabriel Dunston!" shrieked the old man, in a towering passion. "How dare you trespass upon my grounds?"

Donald waited to hear no more, but raised his

arm to beat his defamer to the earth with the insulting taunts still on his lips, when a charming young lady, dressed in a soft, fleecy white robe, with a blush-rose at her throat and her raven hair falling loose upon her snowy shoulders, rushed between him and Dunston, and held out her hands to stay the blow.

"Spare him, Donald Fenton, for my sake."

The old man's face was a livid purple; the great veins on his neck and temples swelled like whipcords, his eyes protruded, and a cold, clammy sweat moistened his leaden brow. He reeled like a drunken man, and catching wildly at the air, fell with a heavy thud upon the piazza.

Several hired men approached, and Mr. Dunston was carried into the house, still insensible.

Donald then left.

When he reached the spot where he had left Midnight he found traces of a struggle, but could see nothing of the animal.

He walked on as rapidly as his wet garments would allow, and soon emerged from the North Road into the main thoroughfare.

About an hour afterward he was entering the gate at Ferndale, and was congratulating himself upon getting in unobserved, when Michael saw him, and ran up to him with a glad cry.

"Oh, Master Don, you're a sight that's good for sore eyes! Sure, we thought you were killed when the poor horse came running in an hour ago, all wet and the saddle-girths broken and covered with blood, and she herself with a bad cut in her side, the poor darling. Sure, your father took on mighty bad when he saw it, and I fear it's killed him. He's very low, the doctor says."

Donald hastily donned a dry suit of clothes and went to his father's room. The door was guarded by an assistant of the doctor's.

"May I go in? I must tell him I am safe."

"I am afraid not; however, I will ask Dr. Black."

The quick ears of the dying man caught the tones of his son's voice, and he raised himself up in bed and commanded them to let Donald enter.

"Don, my boy, thank heaven you are safe! You gave me a great fright. What happened?"

"I saved Dunston's daughter from drowning, sir, and his men drove my horse away and cut her, and old Dunston threatened to hang me. Oh, father, don't go yet."

Richard Fenton threw his arms around Donald's neck and said, faintly:

"Don, my boy, you have done your duty. Tell Dunston I forgive him—good-by—heaven bless you!"

The grasp relaxed, the eyes closed, there was a brief struggle, and when Donald laid the beloved form back on the pillow, life was extinct. The old man, forgiving at last, had entered into eternity.

At about the same moment Gabriel Dunston succumbed to the dread disease which had threatened his life; and the harvest-moon, as it rose in all its glory, and bathed those two mansions with its silvery light, saw the head of each household a lifeless corpse, and the heir and heiress bowed in unspeakable grief.

That ended the feud, and a year later Blanche and Donald were married.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 8, 1920

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

TOUR IN HOUSE ON WHEELS

Defying the high cost of living and at the same time enjoying an ideal trip, Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Mahan of Orlando, Fla., stopped at Whitehouse, N. J., en route to New England. They are spending the summer in a house on wheels—a rebuilt automobile equipped with all the conveniences of light housekeeping and living necessities. The "house" is equipped with electric lights and an electric fan. It also has a full sized bed, a dresser and a kitchenette.

The couple plan to travel through the Middle West after visiting New England. They left their Florida home five weeks ago.

SHE WAS WORTH 50 CENTS

After marrying a couple, a negro pastor was frequently taken aside by the bridegroom and asked: "How much do I owe you?" He had performed such a ceremony when the bridegroom, a flashy dressed negro who had experienced a great deal of emotion while the knot was being tied, whispered in his ear:

"Parson, what do I owe you for marryin' us?"

The parson pondered a moment and then replied:

"As much as you think your wife's worth."

The bridegroom thanked him and then pressed something feelingly into his hand. It was a half dollar.

HAWAIIAN MOTORS RUN ON MOLASSES

From the lowly and sticky molasses is being produced "motor alcohol"—a substitute for gasoline. Discovered by J. P. Foster, chemist of one of the big sugar plantations on the Island of Maui, Hawaii, production within the next three months will be sufficient to furnish fuel for all cars on the islands should a gasoline shortage occur. According to the first reports of the new fuel brought to San Francisco, "motor alcohol" gives more power, greater mileage, easier starting and more freedom from carbon than gasoline. It can be used without an adjustment of the carburetor.

The new fuel is performing in automobile, marine, stationary, truck and tractor engines. In a 36-hour test made with a 75-horsepower tractor the consumption of "motor alcohol" was

four gallons an hour, compared to four and a half gallons of gasoline in the same engine on the same work. Examination of the cylinders showed most of the old carbon deposit removed and the remainder so soft it could be removed with the fingers.

Sugar plantations have been letting their molasses run to waste or burning it for the potash recovery. Nitrogen and phosphoric acid are also valuable by-products of molasses. Now, however, production of the new fuel is found to be more profitable than obtaining other by-products.

At present there is enough molasses available to produce 9,000,000 gallons of "motor alcohol"—enough to supply all automobiles in Hawaii. Development of this industry will release shipping space formerly used for transporting gasoline from the United States.

LAUGHS

Floorwalker—Something I can do for you, sir?
Nervous Gentleman—I have lost my wife.
Floorwalker—Mourning goods on the third floor.

"The next time you spill your coffee on the tablecloth, don't try to hide it by setting the cup on it. I will notice it anyway when I clean up."
"Yes, but I am in the office by that time."

Mrs. Frost—The burglars looted your place, didn't they?
Mrs. Snow—Yes, my dear, and the worst of it is they took the last sheet of brown paper in the house to wrap up the things in.

"I think she will make a fine wife. I have been calling on her for several months, now, and nearly always find her darning one of her father's socks."
"That caught me, too, until I found out that it was the same sock."

Mrs. Spinks—"I can't pay you. I haven't a cent. But perhaps my husband will have some money when he gets home. I believe he's gone to a horse race."
Grocer (weeping)—"Alas! madam, you are mistaken. It wasn't a horse race he went to. It was a church fair."

A German shoemaker left the gas turned on in his shop one night, and, upon arriving in the morning struck a match to light it. There was a terrific explosion, and the shoemaker was blown out through the door almost to the middle of the street. A passer-by rushed to his assistance, and, after helping him to rise, inquired if he was injured. The little German gazed in at his place of business, which was now burning quite briskly, and said: "No, I ain't hurt. But I got out shust in time, eh?"

Nice little boy—I wish you would teach me to black boots.
Bootblack—Wat fur?
Nice little boy—I am not satisfied with my aimless existence at home, and I wish to be independent.
Bootblack—I see. Kin you lick one boy twict as big as y'self wid one hand, hold y'r kit in th' other, an' keep off two other boys wid y'r feet?
Nice little boy—N-no.
Bootblack—Too bad. You won't do fur a bootblack. I'm 'fraid you'll have ter go home an' grow up a dude.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

SUBSTITUTE FOR ICE

An interesting substitute for ice is provided in some parts of Syria. Snow gathered in the mountains is packed in a conical pit, dug in the ground and provided at the bottom with a drain to carry off the water formed—for some of the snow unavoidably melts. The snow is tamped firmly and covered with straw and leaves.

From these pits the solidified snow is disturbed to customers on packhorses and costs all the way from 10 to 25 cents per 100 pounds.

WHY DO FLOWERS HAVE PERFUMES?

Man uses these oils to provide himself with perfume, but the plant or flower has another purpose than this. The perfume is not made for man's use, but for the use of the plant itself. In the plant and flower world the smell of the plant which is in the flower is a part of the scheme whereby plants reproduce themselves.

Every plant in order to reproduce itself must produce a seed. The flowers are in most cases the advance agent of the coming seed. Each flower produces within itself a little powder called the pollen, but as plants are like people—also male and female—they are dependent upon each other for the production of a perfect seed. Some of the pollen from the male plant must be mixed with the pollen of the female plant before a perfect seed results.—The Book of Wonders.

INGENIOUS JAILBREAKERS

Prisoners who recently made their escape from Marion County Jail, Indiana, by soaking the bars of their cells with formaldehyde disinfectant to destroy the temper and make filing possible showed amazing ingenuity, but a prisoner in a California prison surpassed them in resourcefulness.

The man, who was serving a life sentence, was employed in the garden. Obtaining a piece of sacking, he laid it in a corner, soaked it and sowed oats on it. When these had grown a few inches high he hid himself under the sacking and crawled slowly away through a field of oats. The keepers were utterly at a loss, and if someone had not happened to think of placing a bloodhound on the trail the prisoner would undoubtedly have got away.

At Dartmoor, England, the windows are protected by stout iron bars. On one occasion one bar of a cell was found to be filed almost through. The occupant of the cell was brought before the warden and questioned as to how he got the file and where he had hidden it. He refused to answer, and was promptly relegated to another cell. A few days later a bar of this cell was found to be cut, yet the most thorough search failed to reveal the file. The prisoner merely smiled at all questions. Thereupon he was removed to a top cell and kept there. When his release was due the warden asked him, in a friendly way, if he would now solve the mystery. The man laughed, and putting his fingers into his mouth, produced a small watchmaker's file

with a loop of thread attached. The man kept the file suspended in his throat by the thread to a tooth.

Another escape at Dartmoor was marked by great ingenuity. A prisoner employed in the kitchen had to rise early in the morning to get breakfast under way.

One foggy winter morning he vanished. It was an hour before he was missed, and then a rope was found hanging down on the outside of the tall stone wall surrounding the prison yard. It was held in place by a bagful of earth.

The bag was the prisoner's pillow case. The rope was made of his blanket. He had carried these down under his clothes, filled the bag with earth from the nearest flower bed, flung the bag with the rope attached over the wall. And the rest was easy.

Sacks were employed also by another prisoner, who almost escaped from Portland Prison. He managed to make for himself a suit of flour bags. Attired in these, he waited for a baker's cart which he knew would draw up in the prison yard at a certain hour. The moment the baker went into the prison the convict jumped into the cart and drove off. He reached the next town before the police, summoned by telephone, caught him.

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GOOD READING

WHEN SCHOOL PUPILS SMOKED

When tobacco first reached England it was enjoyed in common by both sexes. In the seventeenth century, according to John Ashton, "it was not only usual for the women to join the men in smoking, but in Worcestershire the children were sent to school with pipes in their satchels and the schoolmaster called a halt in their studies while they all smoked—he teaching the neophyte."

Scotch women used to enjoy a pipe the same way as they enjoyed a pinch of snuff. One of the compilers of the "Statistical Account of Scotland," published in 1791, records that "The chief luxuries in the rural districts are snuff, tobacco and whisky." Tea and sugar are little used, but the use of whisky has become very great.

"The use of tobacco may almost be said to be excessive, especially among the female sex. There is scarce a young woman by the time she has been taught to spin but has also learned to smoke. Smoking seems to have been introduced as an antidote to rheumatism and ague. The favorable alteration with respect to these diseases has only produced a greater avidity for tobacco."

INSECTS WOULDN'T DIE

An instance of the extraordinary tenacity of life of certain insects, especially in the larva stage, is told by Dr. R. W. Shufeldt of Washington, in the Medical Record. He cites a case of wasps sitting preening themselves an hour after their heads had been cut off; of butterflies, after a bath of pure chloroform, reviving on the spreading board to which they had been pinned and exerting such strength as to pull out the pins that transfixed them.

But the most remarkable case of all was that of a wireworm or larva of a click beetle. This, after being picked up, fought and bit with its hooked scissors-like jaws till it drew blood from the doctor's finger. He put it in a pill box with some rotten wood and a few days later dipped it in pure formalin. This did not kill the larva, so it was dropped into 95 per cent. alcohol, where it remained for fully a minute. This seemed to stiffen it out, and Dr. Shufeldt sent it in a sealed glass vial to Dr. E. A. Schwarz of the United States National Museum in Washington. Several days later Dr. Schwarz returned it in the same bottle. The larva was then as lively as on the day it had been captured.

Dr. Shufeldt put it in a glass jar, in which it thrived for several weeks. From this he transferred it to a vial closed with a cork, where, after remaining without food, water or change of air for ten days it began to eat its way through the cork. It was transferred then to a sealed glass tube, in which it remained for nearly two months, when it gradually shrivelled up and died. From early in May until the end of August the only liquid that had come near it was formalin and alcohol, either of which would instantly kill most insects.

KEEPING DESERT CHIEFS FRIENDLY

By her successful protection of the caravan routes France has earned the gratitude of the people of the regions that border on the great Sahara. Many of these great trade caravans are literally moving cities. They sometimes consist of 12,000 camels, to say nothing of horses, donkeys, sheep and goats.

As showing the constant effort that the French officials make to establish friendly relations with the natives it may be mentioned that several times each year the commandants of the French posts along the edge of the Sahara organize fantasies in honor of the Arab sheiks of the region. The sheiks come in to attend them, followed by great retinues of turbaned and splendidly mounted retainers, and with the same enthusiasm with which an American countryside turns out to see the circus.

Races with valuable money prizes are arranged for the visitors' horses, and before the sheiks leave they are presented with ornate saddles, gold mounted rifles and sometimes with crosses of the Legion of Honor.

In return for this hospitality they willingly agree to capture and surrender certain fugitives from justice, to warn the more lawless of their tribesmen that the plundering of caravans must cease, to furnish quotas of recruits for the native cavalry and to send in for sale to the remount department a large number of desert bred horses. Most important of all, they go back to their tented homes in the desert immensely impressed with the power and the generosity of France.

Not content with these manifestations of friendship, the French Government makes it a point to invite the native rulers of the lands under its control to visit France occasionally as the guests of the nation. Escorted by French officers who can talk to them in their own tongue these Colonial visitors in their outlandish costumes experience the delights of Paris, are dined by the President of the Republic at the Elysee Palace, receive the freedom of the city at the Hotel de Ville and finally return to their own lands friends and allies of France for the rest of their lives.

By a network of small oasis garrisons and desert patrols, recruited from the desert tribes and mounted on the tall, swift trotting camels known as mehart, France has made the Saharan trade routes, if not as safe as Fifth avenues or Picadilly, certainly very much safer for the lone traveller than certain streets of Chicago and Paris.

It has long been the fashion to hold up the Northwest Mounted Police as the model for all constabulary forces, just as it has been the fashion to extol the English as the model colonizers, but when you consider the smallness of their numbers, the vastness of the region which they control and the character of the climate and its inhabitants, it is contended that the blue ribbon in his regard should go to the lean, brown faced, hard riding camel men who have carried law and order into the furthestmost corners of the great Sahara.

CUTS TEETH AT \$4

A third set of teeth was cut by a Memphis man of \$4 recently.

N. D. Starr, of Memphis, found himself in need of a set of artificial substitutes for the teeth provided by nature. But when he visited his dentist the price was too high, and he decided to go toothless. However, through one of the unaccountable happenings which sometimes upset all rules, Mr. Starr discovered that he was cutting twelve new teeth. They are almost through now, although they are not very useful yet, owing to the fact that his gums are sore, in a fashion familiar to all mothers of teething infants or to boys and girls whose second teeth are replacing their baby teeth, and even to the older boys and girls who proudly announce, "I'm cutting a wisdom tooth."

Dentists doubtless will contend that such a thing cannot happen. But Mr. Starr knows that he now has teeth where no teeth were before. Moreover, he says his eyesight is better than it was several years ago, and that so far from his vigor being impaired by advancing years he feels stronger and more youthful than he did when he was 70.

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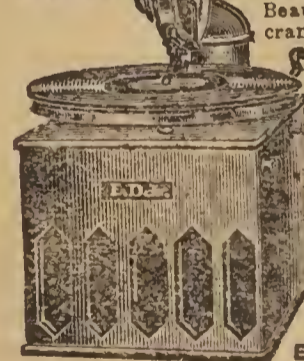
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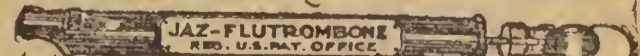
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This lacertilian—to give him his correct family name—has probably kept the muskrat away from the South Carolina coast, for the muskrat is unknown on the coast. If allowed to multiply, the alligator will make inroads on the carp, the garfish and the cotton mouth, all undesirable members of our fauna.

The sum total of the alligator's evil doing amounts to this: He catches a dog now and then; once in a long while pulls a hog or bites the tail off a cow, for sundry stump-tailed cows along the Atlantic Coast line right of way have met misfortune in this way.

The cow, the dog and the hog are out of place when the alligator can get at them; but at best very little of this happens.

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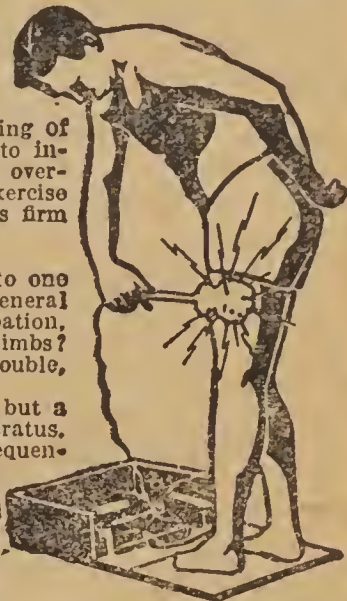
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In blazing for a path small trees were marked, but in blazing for the bounds of a lot or town or for a farm line larger trees were usually selected, the blaze being made about breast high. When, however, as was often the case, the blazing was done in winter on deep snow by men travelling on snowshoes, the mark was necessarily higher up. When such a line is travelled in the summer, especially after some years, during which the trees have grown, the marks are sometimes found high up on the trunks and are likely to escape the eye of the inexperienced. As many of them will also be partially overgrown the task of the surveyor who goes over one of these old lines is not always easy.

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